

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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## Box Office Performances of 1937-38 Season's Pictures—No. 3

### Twentieth Century-Fox

"Hot Water," with Jed Prouty, Spring Byington, Shirley Deane, and Russell Gleason, produced by Max Golden and directed by Frank Strayer, from a screen play by Robert Chapin and Karen DeWolf: Good-Poor (mostly Fair).

"Life Begins in College," with the Ritz Brothers, Tony Martin, and Gloria Stuart, produced by Harold Wilson and directed by William A. Seiter, from a screen play by Karl Tunberg and Don Ettlinger: Very Good-Good.

"Lancer Spy," with George Sanders, Dolores Del Rio, Peter Lorre, and Virginia Field, produced by Samuel G. Engle and directed by Gregory Ratoff, from a screen play by Philip Dunne: Good-Poor.

"Roll Along, Cowboy," with Smith Ballew and Cecilia Parker, produced by Sol Lesser and directed by Gus Meins, from a screen play by Dan Jarrett: Fair.

"Heidi," with Shirley Temple, Jean Hersholt, Arthur Treacher, Sidney Blackmer, and Marcia Mae Jones, produced by Raymond Griffith and directed by Allan Dwan, from a screen play by Walter Ferris and Julien Josephson: Excellent-Good (most reports said Very Good).

"Charlie Chan On Broadway," with Warner Oland, Joan Marsh, Keye Luke, and J. Edward Bromberg, produced by John Stone and directed by Eugene Forde, from a screen play by Charles Belden and Jerry Cady: Good-Fair.

"Ali Baba Goes To Town," with Eddie Cantor, Tony Martin, Roland Young, and June Lang, produced by Lawrence Schwab and directed by David Butler, from a screen play by Harry Tugend and Jack Yellen: Very Good-Fair.

"Danger—Love At Work," with Ann Sothorn, Jack Haley, and Mary Boland, produced by Harold Wilson and directed by Otto L. Preminger, from a screen play by Ben Markson and J. E. Grant: Good-Fair (mostly Poor).

"Dangerously Yours," with Cesar Romero, Phyllis Brooks, and Alan Dinehart, produced by Sol Wurtzel and directed by Mal St. Clair, from a screen play by Lou Breslow and John Patrick: Fair-Poor.

"Second Honeymoon," with Loretta Young, Tyrone Power, Lyle Talbot, Stuart Erwin, Claire Trevor, and Marjorie Weaver, produced by Raymond Griffith and directed by Walter Lang, from a screen play by Kathryn Scola and Darrell Ware: Very Good-Good.

"Forty-Five Fathers," with Jane Withers, Thomas Beck, and Louise Henry, produced by John Stone and directed by James Tingling, from a screen play by Frances Hyland and Albert Ray: Very Good-Fair.

"Dinner at the Ritz," with Annabella, Paul Lukas, and David Niven, produced by Robert T. Kane and directed by Harold D. Schuster, from a screen play by Roland Pertwee and Romney Brent: Fair.

"Big Town Girl," with Claire Trevor, Donald Woods, and Alan Baxter, produced by Milton H. Field and directed by Alfred Werker, from a screen play by Lou Breslow, John Patrick, Robert Ellis and Helen Logan: Fair.

"Borrowing Trouble," with Jed Prouty, Spring Byington, Shirley Deane, and Russell Gleason, produced by Max Golden and directed by Frank R. Strayer, from a screen play by Robert Chapin and Karen DeWolf: Fair.

The number of pictures reported since the beginning of the season are 22, rated as follows:

Excellent 1; Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Fair, 2; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 2; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 2.

The first 22 of the 1936-37 season exclusive of the west-erns, were rated as follows:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 4; Good, 6; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 3.

A decided improvement this season.

### United Artists

"Farewell Again," with Leslie Banks, Flora Robson, and Sebastian Shaw, produced by Erich Pommer and directed by Tim Whelan, from a screen play by Ian Hay: Fair.

"Stand-In," with Joan Blondell, Leslie Howard, Humphrey Bogart, and Marla Shelton, produced by Walter Wanger and directed by Tay Garnett, from a screen play by Gene Towne and Graham Baker: Good.

"52nd Street," with Ian Hunter, Leo Carrillo, Pat Pater-son, and Kenny Baker, produced by Walter Wanger and directed by Harold Young, from a screen play by Grover Jones: Poor.

"Nothing Sacred," with Carole Lombard, Frederic March, Charles Winninger, and Walter Connolly, produced by David O. Selznick and directed by William A. Wellman, from a screen play by Ben Hecht: Excellent-Very Good.

"Murder on Diamond Row," with Edmund Lowe, produced by Alexander Korda and directed by William K. Howard, from a screen play by Edward O. Berkman: Fair.

Eleven pictures have been reported since the beginning of the season, rated as follows:

Excellent-Very Good, 3; Excellent-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1; Poor, 1.

The first eleven of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 5; Good-Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1; Poor, 1.

A decided improvement this season.

### Universal

"Law For Tombstone," with Buck Jones, produced by Buck Jones and directed by W. B. Eason, from a screen play by Frances Guilian: Fair.

"Idol of the Crowds," with John Wayne and Sheila Bromley, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by Arthur Lubin, from a screen play by George Waggner and Harold Buckley: Fair-Poor.

"Trouble At Midnight," with Noah Beery, Jr., produced by Ben Koenig and Barney Sarecky and directed by Floyd Beebe, from a screen play by Maurice Geraghty: Fair-Poor.

"That's My Story," with Claudia Morgan, William Lundigan, and Bernardene Hayes, produced by Robert Presnell and directed by Sidney Salkow, from a screen play by Barry Trivers: Fair-Poor.

"The Westland Case," with Preston Foster, Carol Hughes, Astrid Allwyn, and Frank Jenks, produced by Irving Starr and directed by Christy Cabanne, from a screen play by Robertson White: Fair-Poor.

"A Girl with Ideas," with Wendy Barrie, Walter Pid-

(Continued on last page)



### **"Tovarich" with Claudette Colbert and Charles Boyer**

(Warner Bros., Dec. 25; time, 97 min.)

There is no doubt as to the drawing power of this picture, first, because of the popularity of the stars, and secondly, because of the fame of the play from which it was adapted. Its appeal, however, will be directed mostly to high-class audiences. Those who saw the play will be somewhat disappointed, for in its transition from the stage to the screen it has lost some of its charm. The first half is spoiled by too much burlesquing; but it gets much better in the second half, where there is plentiful comedy and human appeal. The best situation is that which takes place during a formal dinner party to which the Soviet Commissar had been invited; the comedy arises from the fact that the host was unaware that his butler and maid were Russian nobles, and that the Commissar was their worst enemy. Human interest is awakened by the eagerness of the butler and of the maid to hold on to their jobs, which meant their security and peace of mind:—

Although he had forty million francs deposited in his name in the Bank of France, Boyer, a former Russian Prince, refuses to touch one cent of it because the money had been entrusted to him by the Czar to be held until he would return to the throne. He and his wife (Miss Colbert), a former Grand Duchess, live in squalid surroundings and even resort to stealing for their food. They finally decide to seek employment as butler and housemaid in the home of wealthy Melville Cooper, without divulging to him their social rank; they are overjoyed when Cooper engages them. In a short time Cooper, his wife (Isabel Jeans), his daughter (Anita Louise), and his son (Maurice Murphy), come to adore their two servants, because they display talents as musicians, fencers, and poker players. At an important dinner party given by Cooper, at which the Soviet Commissar (Basil Rathbone) had been invited, one of the guests recognizes both Miss Colbert and Boyer and bows to them. Cooper and his wife then learn who they are and are terrified at what might happen upon the Commissar's arrival. But the dinner passes off smoothly. After the dinner Rathbone pays a visit to the kitchen and pleads with Boyer to help Russia by turning over the money so as to stave off the avaricious attempts of other nations to gain control of Russia's oil wells. Although they despise Rathbone and everything he stood for, they turn the money over to him for the sake of Russia. And their happiness is restored when Cooper tells them they could remain in his employ.

Jacques Deval wrote the original play and Robert E. Sherwood, the English version; Casey Robinson wrote the screen play, Anatole Litvak directed it, and Robert Lord produced it. In the cast are Morris Carnovsky, Gregory Gaye, and others.

Suitable for all. Class A.

### **"Wise Girl" with Miriam Hopkins, Ray Milland and Walter Abel**

(RKO, December 31; time, 69½ min.)

Good! In line with the type of comedies that are now produced, "Wise Girl" has its share of foolishness; but underneath the wisecracks there is human appeal, awakened by the loveableness of two children. These two children, Betty Philson and Marianna Strelby, are extremely talented, delivering their lines with charm and ease. There are several situations that provoke hearty laughter; one such situation is that in which Miriam Hopkins, unaccustomed to the ways of the bohemians in Greenwich Village, is shocked when her neighbors, both men and women, pay her a visit while she was taking a bath:—

Miss Hopkins, daughter of millionaire Henry Stephenson, is determined to get her orphaned nieces, whom she had never seen, away from their uncle (Ray Milland), a penniless artist living in Greenwich Village; the mother of the children had been her sister, and the father, Milland's brother. She goes to the Village, where, by posing as a poor girl out of work, she wins Milland's sympathy. As a matter of fact, she even goes to work, and is proud of the money she earns. Milland is enraged when the Children's Aid Society takes his nieces away from him. When he finds out who Miss Hopkins was he feels certain that she had something to do with it. In the court fight that follows, Miss Hopkins comes out the victor and takes the children to her home. But she cannot win their love, for they could not forgive her for having taken them away from Milland. She finally wins them over by explaining to them that it

was for Milland's sake that she had done so, for she felt that, if he were not burdened with responsibilities, he could develop his talents as a painter. She and the children work out a scheme whereby they bring Milland around to their way of thinking. Everything is adjusted to the satisfaction of all, for Miss Hopkins and Milland had fallen in love with each other.

Allan Scott and Charles Norman wrote the story, and Allan Scott, the screen play; Leigh Jason directed it, and Edward Kaufman produced it. In the cast are Alec Craig, Guinn Williams, Margaret Dumont, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Man-Proof" with Myrna Loy, Franchot Tone, Rosalind Russell and Walter Pidgeon**

(MGM, January 7; time, 74 min.)

The combination of the four stars should assure good box-office returns. But the picture's appeal is directed almost exclusively to sophisticated audiences, and at that mostly to women. Its chief fault lies in the fact that the audience is not in sympathy with the heroine, because she shows weakness of character. In addition, there is practically a complete lack of action, the story being told mostly by dialogue. The picture lacks emotional appeal:—

Myrna Loy, heartbroken because she had been jilted by Walter Pidgeon, who had married wealthy Rosalind Russell, decides to keep on fighting to get him back. Her mother (Nana Bryant) convinces her that she should forget him and devote her time to a career. Franchot Tone, a newspaper illustrator, helps her to obtain a position on his paper, and for a time she is happy. But a few encounters with Pidgeon, who had returned from his honeymoon, sets her back where she had started from. She calls up Miss Russell and informs her that she still loved Pidgeon and would not give him up. Her eyes are opened eventually when Miss Russell, unwilling to give up her husband, shows him up for the weak character that he was. Pidgeon is compelled to admit the truth of Miss Russell's statements, and of the fact that he never really loved Miss Loy. Miss Loy rushes to Tone for consolation. To the surprise and happiness of both of them, they realize that they are in love with each other.

The plot was adapted from the story "The Four Marys" by Fanny Heaslip Lea. Vincent Lawrence, Waldemar Young, and George Oppenheimer wrote the screen play; Richard Thorpe directed it, and Louis D. Lighton produced it. In the cast are Rita Johnson, Ruth Hussey, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Suitability, Class B.

### **"Bulldog Drummond's Revenge" with John Barrymore, John Howard and Louise Campbell**

(Paramount, January 7; time, 55 min.)

As in the first picture of this series, Paramount has given it a good production; the photography is especially good. It should please followers of wild melodramas, for although it lacks plausibility, the action is so exciting that one is held in suspense to the end. And there is considerable comedy, brought about by Reginald Denny who, during his exciting escapades, worries about his wife. John Barrymore's part is of minor importance in this version, most of the sleuthing work being done by John Howard (Drummond). The action starts in London, and continues on the train ferry from Dover to Calais.

In the development of the plot, Howard, who had promised his fiancée (Louise Campbell) to give up his adventurous way of living as soon as they were married, innocently becomes embroiled in an exciting case involving the theft of a powerful explosive. The inventor of this explosive had been killed by his trusted secretary (Frank Puglia), who had stolen it to sell it to an international spy ring. Howard, with the help of Denny and his faithful butler (E. E. Clive), finally overpowers Puglia, who had boarded the train ferry disguised as a woman. He turns Puglia over to Barrymore, Scotland Yard Inspector. Apologizing to Miss Campbell for having neglected her, he is overjoyed when she tells him that she enjoyed his exciting way of living and did not want him to change after their marriage.

H. C. McNeile wrote the story, and Edward T. Lowe, the screen play; Louis King directed it. In the cast are Nydia Westman, Robert Gleckler, Lucien Littlefield, and others.

The murders make it unsuitable for children. Class B.



### "Crashing Hollywood" with Lee Tracy, Joan Woodbury and Richard Lane

(RKO, January 7; time, 60 min.)

A fairly good comedy-melodrama; the Hollywood studio background gives it mass appeal. Although the story is ordinary, it holds one's attention because of the amusing characterizations. Credit must be given to Richard Lane, in the part of a Hollywood producer, for giving the picture most of its laughs. He takes ordinary lines and situations and makes them seem so comical that one forgets about the story defects. And for thrills, the closing scenes are exciting enough to please most fans; it is there that the gangster is captured after a hectic chase through the different studio sets. The romance is moderately pleasant:

Lee Tracy, bound for Hollywood, where he hoped to make good as a screen writer, is amused when Paul Guilfoyle, just previously released from prison, and his conniving wife (Lee Patrick) mistake him for a crook. Although his brief case was filled with scripts, they thought that it was full of stolen bonds. Guilfoyle, without letting Tracy know about his background, offers to collaborate with him on crook stories; he supplies Tracy with information about the robberies in which his gang leader, "The Hawk" (Bradley Page), had been involved. The stories appeal to Lane, an eccentric producer, and he uses them for a new series with his leading actor (also played by Bradley Page) in the title part. The first picture is a great success. Tracy cannot go on, however, for he had lost Joan Woodbury, a girl he had met on the train, and with whom he had fallen in love; she believed he really was a crook. They meet again and everything is explained. Then Miss Woodbury becomes his secretary. Things go on smoothly until the gangster, who had seen the picture and had become enraged, arrives in Hollywood. He tries to kill Guilfoyle, but is prevented by Tracy, who helps the police capture him. With the criminal out of the way, Tracy and Guilfoyle are able to continue with their script work.

Paul Dickey and Mann Page wrote the story, and Paul Yawitz and Gladys Atwater, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Tom Kennedy, Frank M. Thomas, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Love and Hisses" with Walter Winchell, Ben Bernie and Simone Simon

(20th Century-Fox, December 31; time, 84 min.)

A good box-office attraction, although not as entertaining as "Wake Up and Live"; the fault lies in the silly story. Patrons who are still eager to see Winchell and Bernie, may like it; others may find the continued "feud" pretty tiresome by this time. The real surprise is Simone Simon's display of talent as a singer; she has a good voice and a charming delivery. In addition, she shows some improvement in her acting, but her accent is still too thick. There is plentiful music, some amusing clowning on the part of Joan Davis and Bert Lahr, and a romance. The picture ends with a big production number:—

When Winchell exposes Bernie's new singing find (Miss Simon), whom he had never met, as a fraud, Bernie decides to teach Winchell a lesson. Through a ruse, he brings about a meeting between Miss Simon and Winchell, leading Winchell to believe that she descended from an aristocratic French family, who did not want her to go on the stage. Winchell is so impressed with her voice that he is enraged when Bernie refuses to engage her for his new cafe show. Wherever Winchell takes her for a hearing, he is met with rebuffs, for every one knew about Bernie's joke. Bernie's idea was to have Miss Simon appear in his cafe on the opening night and then inform the public how he had fooled Winchell. But Winchell finds out about the plot and decides to turn the tables on Bernie. Spreading a rumor that Miss Simon had been kidnapped, he sends himself a ransom note, demanding that \$50,000 be brought to a certain secluded spot. Bernie and Winchell rush to the spot to plead with the gangsters to give them more time. They order Winchell to go back to the city for the money and hold Bernie as security, threatening to kill him unless Winchell returned by twelve o'clock. When Winchell does not return, the would-be kidnapers blindfold Bernie and make him believe that they were taking him to a dock to drown him. Instead, they take him to his cafe, where still blindfolded, Bernie pleads for his life, to the amusement of the assembled guests. When the bandage is removed from his eyes and Bernie finds out that the joke was on him, he takes it good-naturedly. Miss Simon makes a hit, and is

happy when her sweetheart (Dick Baldwin) is recognized as a good song writer.

Art Arthur wrote the story, and he and Curtis Kenyon, the screen play; Sidney Lanfield directed it, and Kenneth MacGowan produced it. In the cast are Peters Sisters, Ruth Terry, Douglas Fowley, and others.

Suitable for all. Class A.

### "The Shadow" with Charles Quigley and Rita Hayworth

(Columbia, December 9; time, 57½ min.)

Just an average murder mystery melodrama of program grade. It is mildly exciting, the only thing in its favor being that the identity of the murderer is so well concealed that the spectator is kept guessing to the very end. It is doubtful if any one will suspect who the murderer is. The circus background is neither novel nor exciting, and the settings look pretty cheap. It is in the closing scenes that the picture is somewhat thrilling; there the heroine's life is endangered. The romance is of slight importance:—

Upon the death of her father, Rita Hayworth takes over the management of the circus he had owned. She is downcast when she learns that the star performer (Donald Kirke), whom every one hated, held notes signed by her father amounting to \$60,000 for moneys he had lent him: Kirke lets it be known that he intended to take over the circus. Before Kirke could carry out his threat he is murdered by a mysterious hooded figure. Kirke's crippled assistant (Dwight Frye), who, as it develops, was his brother, knows who the murderer is; but before he can give the information to the police he is murdered. Charles Quigley, publicity agent for the circus, solves the case; he shows that the murderer was Sally St. Clair, Kirke's wife, who had been deserted by him some time previously. She and another girl, by using a harness, had passed for Siamese Twins and, therefore, had not been suspected. Miss Hayworth and Quigley decide to marry.

Milton Raison wrote the story, and Arthur T. Horman, the screen play; C. C. Coleman, Jr., directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Mare Lawrence, Arthur Loft, Marjorie Main, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "She's Got Everything" with Gene Raymond, Ann Sothern, Helen Broderick and Victor Moore

(RKO, December 31; time, 72 min.)

Just moderately entertaining. Aside from lavish settings and one comical situation, there is not much to recommend in this romantic comedy, for the story is extremely silly. Both Ann Sothern and Gene Raymond are handicapped by the trite material, and, despite their efforts, there is not much that they can do. Even Victor Moore and Helen Broderick, who usually can be depended upon to provoke hearty laughter, fail to get more than a smile, because of the trite dialogue. The one really comical situation is that in which Solly Ward, a fake hypnotist, puts Helen Broderick to sleep and does not know how to awaken her. In the closing scenes, everyone goes completely haywire in an attempt to be comical:—

When Miss Sothern finds that her father's estate consisted of nothing but debts, she decides to go to work to pay the creditors. Moore and Miss Sothern's aunt (Helen Broderick) decide that the best thing for Miss Sothern to do would be to marry a millionaire. By promising that they would be fully repaid, Moore is able to get financial backing from three other creditors. Miss Sothern knows nothing, of course, about the scheme. Moore obtains a job for her with Raymond, millionaire coffee dealer, hoping that it would end in a romance. His plans work, for Raymond falls in love with Miss Sothern, as she does with him. Raymond finds out about the scheme and, thinking that Miss Sothern was in on it, becomes so incensed that he publicly denounces her. This infuriates her. Raymond is abashed when he learns the truth and apologizes, begging Miss Sothern to marry him. She agrees, her purpose being to pay him back for what he had done to her. And so she jilts him on their wedding day. Raymond is not angry; instead, he rushes after her and prevents her from sailing, compelling her to marry him instead.

Joseph Hoffman and Monroe Shaff wrote the story, and Harry Segall and Maxwell Shane, the screen play; Joseph Santley directed it and Albert Lewis produced it. In the cast are Parkyakarkus, Billy Gilbert, William Brisbane, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Class A.



geon, and Kent Taylor, produced by Edmund Grainger and directed by S. Sylvan Simon, from a screen play by Bruce Manning and Robert T. Shannon: Fair-Poor.

"Merry Go Round of 1938," with Mischa Auer, Alice Brady, Joe Hodges, and Louise Fazenda, produced by Buddy DeSylva and directed by Irving Cummings, from a screen play by A. Dorian Otvos and Monte Brice: Good-Fair.

"Boss of Lonely Valley," with Buck Jones, produced by Buck Jones and directed by Ray Taylor, from a screen play by Frances Guilian: Good-Fair.

"Some Blondes Are Dangerous," with Noah Beery, Jr., William Gargan, Nan Grey, and Dorothea Kent, produced by E. M. Asher and directed by Milton Carruth, from a screen play by Lester Cole: Fair.

"Courage of the West," with Bob Baker and Lois January, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by Joseph H. Lewis, from a screen play by J. Norton Parker: Good-Fair.

"Adventure's End," with John Wayne and Diana Gibson, produced by Trem Carr and directed by Arthur Lubin, from a screen play by Ben Grauman Kohn, Scott Darling and Sid Sutherland: Fair.

The number of pictures reported since the beginning of the season are 17, rated as follows:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 6; Poor, 1.

The first 17 of last season, exclusive of the westerns, were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 6.

A slight falling off in quality this season.

### Warner Bros.

"The Great Garrick," with Brian Aherne, Olivia DeHavilland, and Edward Everett Horton, produced by Mervyn LeRoy and directed by James Whale, from a screen play by Ernst Vajda: Good-Poor.

"It's Love I'm After," with Leslie Howard, Bette Davis, Olivia DeHavilland, and Patric Knowles, produced by Harry Joe Brown and directed by Archie L. Mayo, from a screen play by Casey Robinson: Good-Fair.

"Expensive Husbands," with Beverly Roberts and Patrick Knowles, produced by Frank Mandel and directed by Bobby Connolly from a screen play by Lillie Hayward, Jean Negulesco, and Jay Brennan: Fair-Poor.

"First Lady," with Kay Francis, Preston Foster, Verree Teasdale, and Walter Connolly, produced by Harry Joe Brown and directed by Stanley Logan, from a screen play by Rowland Leigh: Good-Fair.

Up to "First Lady," the number of pictures reported is seven, rated as follows:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 1.

The first seven of last season were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 1; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 3.

There has been an improvement this season.

## INDIANA EXHIBITORS AGAINST MGM BROADCASTING

Associated Theatres of Indiana, having ascertained that the MGM air shows on Thursday evenings have hurt their box offices, passed the following resolution:

"Whereas, we have found through a series of group meetings held in the State of Indiana that the majority of Exhibitors in attendance at these meetings, and all other Exhibitors contacted, agree that the Metro Air Show has definitely curtailed Box Office receipts on Thursday nights.

"Whereas, we have further found that screen stars appearing on Sunday night programs have affected Box Office receipts.

"Whereas, it is deemed impractical for the Producing Companies or their stars to attempt broadcasts at hours not conflicting with peak theatre attendance hours, because, of the difference in time in the various parts of the country, therefore,

"Be It Resolved, that the Board of Directors of the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana assembled this third day of December, 1937, have definitely gone on record as being opposed to motion picture stars appearing over the radio at any time and more particularly opposed to the motion picture studio produced programs which are now making their appearance on the air."

What this paper cannot understand is why these exhibitors should have confined themselves to the MGM broadcasts. If the MGM airshows hurt business, the other airshows must hurt them just as much.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana will pass another resolution condemning not only the MGM, but also the Warner Bros. airshows, as well as the airshows of Cecil B. de Mille and of all others; also the appearance of all stars no matter what company they may be working for.

## SEX RELATIONSHIP IN PICTURES

Before the revolt of the American people against sex vulgarity in motion pictures, almost every producer believed that no picture could make a "tremendous" hit unless it appealed to the sexual passions; and that the greater the sex appeal the larger would be the crowds that would go to see it.

The revolt of the churches, which led to the formation of the Legion of Decency and the consequent self-imposed censorship shattered, of course, that belief to a certain extent, with the result that the industry made more money than at any other time in its history (until the last depression, of course), by reason of that fact that parents no longer feared lest they and their sons and daughters see in a picture something that would embarrass them.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has fought for clean pictures ever since it was founded; it was prompted to adopt such a policy, not by any prudish feeling, but by a conviction that the American people, in the main, resented vulgarity in their entertainment.

If there were needed additional proof to demonstrate convincingly this belief it has been furnished by Motion Picture Herald's recent check-up of the popularity of the different stars.

The Herald divided the stars into three main groups, in accordance with the popularity of each star.

The first group consists of ten names, and at the head of these stands, not Mae West, but Shirley Temple.

I looked into the second group, the "Honor Star" group, as Motion Picture Herald has called it, consisting of fifteen names, but Mae West's name was not in it. I looked into the third group, consisting of thirty-six names, and there I found it, standing thirty-fourth on the list. Alice Faye, Bette Davis, Irene Dunne, Deanna Durbin, Kay Francis, Janet Gaynor, Carole Lombard, Luise Rainer, Ginger Rogers, Norma Shearer—all these women stars are ahead of her in the list. Even Freddie Bartholomew tops her; he stands sixth in that list.

Let us now take sex pictures to see how they fare: In the last three years I have not seen a sexier picture than "Expensive Husbands," produced by Warner Bros. According to the old theory, this picture should have made a "killing" business. But what does this week's box office check-up indicate? It shows that it has done fair to poor business.

What has prompted this editorial is not a desire to criticize Warner Bros., for after all this company has made pictures that have brought honor to this industry—"Louis Pasteur," "Emil Zola," "Green Pastures" (even though it was not a big success financially) and many others, but merely to call the industry's attention to these facts to the end that some of those persons who still adhere to the old beliefs may be enlightened, and thus stop longing for the old days. There are greater profits in pictures that make people either laugh or cry than there are in pictures that kindle their sexual passions. Sex has practically destroyed the stage, and sex would have destroyed also the screen, had not better counsel prevailed.



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NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 1938

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Big City—MGM (79 min.).....	150
Big Shot, The—RKO (60 min.).....	122
Big Town Girl—20th Century-Fox (69½ min.).....	190
Black Aces—Universal (58 m.).....	Not Reviewed
Blazing Barrier—Monogram (65 min.).....	126
Blonde Trouble—Paramount (66 min.).....	134
Blossoms on Broadway—Paramount (87 min.).....	195
Boothill Brigade—Republic (55 m.).....	Not Reviewed
Boots and Saddles—Republic (59 m.).....	Not Reviewed
Boots of Destiny—Grand Nat'l. (56 m.)....	Not Reviewed
Born to the West—Paramount (50 min.)....	Not Reviewed
Borneo—20th Century-Fox (75 min.).....	143
Born Reckless—20th Century-Fox (58 min.).....	115
Borrowing Trouble—20th Century-Fox (59½ min.)..	186
Boss of Lonely Valley—Universal (59 min.)	Not Reviewed
Boy of the Streets—Monogram (76 min.).....	198
Breakfast For Two—RKO (66 min.).....	171
Bride for Henry, A—Monogram (58 min.).....	163
Bride Wore Red, The—MGM (102 min.).....	170
Broadway Melody of 1938—MGM (109½ min.).....	143
Bulldog Drummond at Bay—Republic (61 m.).....	127
Bulldog Drummond Comes Back—Paramount (59 m.)	155
Californian, The—20th C-Fox (58 m.).....	Not Reviewed
Carnival Queen—Universal (66 min.).....	167
Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo—20th Cent.-Fox (71m.)..	207
Charlie Chan on Broadway—20th Cent.-Fox (67½ m.)	154
Colorado Kid—Republic (56 min.).....	Not Reviewed
Confession—First National (85½ min.).....	138
Conquest—MGM (111 min.).....	183
Counsel for Crime—Columbia (60 min.).....	155
County Fair—Monogram (72 min.).....	191
Courage of the West—Universal (57 min.)..	Not Reviewed
Crime in the Clouds—Warner Bros. (See "Fly Away Baby").....	103
Damaged Goods—Grand National (56 min.).....	106
Damsel in Distress, A—RKO (100 min.).....	195
Dance Charlie Dance—First National (63 min.).....	135
Danger—Love at Work—20th Cent.-Fox (80½ m.)..	162
Danger Patrol—RKO (59 min.).....	195
Danger Valley—Monogram (55 min.).....	Not Reviewed
Dangerous Adventure—Columbia (58 min.).....	130
Dangerous Holiday—Republic (57 min.).....	110
Dangerously Yours—20th Century-Fox (61½ m.).....	178
Dark Journey—United Artists (81 min.).....	142
Daughter of Shanghai—Paramount (61½ min.).....	207
Dead End—United Artists (93 min.).....	138
Devil's Saddle Legion, The—Warner Bros. (52 min.).....	Not Reviewed
Dinner at the Ritz—20th Century-Fox (77 min.).....	187
Doctor Syn—Gaumont-British (77½ min.).....	174
Double or Nothing—Paramount (90 min.).....	150
Double Wedding—MGM (86 min.).....	174
Drums of Destiny—Crescent (62 min.).....	114
Duke Comes Back, The—Republic (64 min.).....	198
Easy Living—Paramount (87 min.).....	119
Ebb Tide—Paramount (90½ min.).....	178
Emperor's Candlesticks, The—MGM (89 min.).....	119
Empty Holsters—First Nat'l. (62 m.).....	Not Reviewed
Escape By Night—Republic (67½ min.).....	163
Ever Since Eve—First National (79 min.).....	110
Exclusive—Paramount (77 min.).....	127
Expensive Husbands—Warner Bros. (62 min.).....	199
Farewell Again—United Artists (83 min.).....	186
Federal Bullets—Monogram (61 min.).....	178
52nd Street—United Artists (81 min.).....	179
Fight For Your Lady—RKO (66 min.).....	162
Fight to the Finish, A—Columbia (58 min.).....	111
Firefly, The—MGM (138 min.).....	151
First Lady—Warner Bros. (82 min.).....	194
Fit For a King—RKO (73 min.).....	155
Flight From Glory—RKO (66½ min.).....	138
Footloose Heiress—Warner Bros. (59 min.).....	134
Forlorn River—Paramount (56 m.).....	Not Reviewed
Forty-Five Fathers—20th Century-Fox (70½ min.)..	187
Forty Naughty Girls—RKO (62½ min.).....	155
Frontier Town—Grand Nat'l. (58 min.)....	Not Reviewed
Game That Kills, The—Columbia (55½ m.).....	158
Gangway—Gaumont-British (87 min.).....	142
Girl With Ideas, A—Universal (66 min.).....	182
Girls Can Play—Columbia (60 min.).....	106
Glory Trail—Crescent (65 min.).....	114
God's Country and the Man—Monogram (56 m.)	Not Reviewed
Great Gambini, The—Paramount (69 min.).....	110
Great Garrick, The—Warner Bros. (88½ min.).....	175
Heart of the Rockies—Republic (58 m.)....	Not Reviewed
Heidi—20th Century-Fox (87½ min.).....	171
Here's Flash Casey—Grand Nat'l. (57 min.).....	174
Hideaway—RKO (58 min.).....	130
Hideout in the Alps—Grand Nat'l. (75 m.)..	Not Reviewed
High Flyers—RKO (70 min.).....	179
High, Wide and Handsome—Paramount (104 min.)..	159
Hitting a New High—RKO (84½ min.).....	203
Hold 'Em Navy—Paramount (63½ min.).....	187
Hollywood Roundup—Columbia (64 min.)..	Not Reviewed
Hoosier Schoolboy, The—Monogram (62 min.).....	115
Hot Water—20th Century-Fox (58 min.).....	159
Hurricane, The—United Artists (103 min.).....	194
I Cover the War—Universal (67 min.).....	114
Idol of the Crowds—Universal (62½ min.).....	163
I'll Take Romance—Columbia (85 min.).....	206
It Can't Last Forever—Columbia (66 min.).....	134
It Could Happen to You—Republic (64 min.).....	114
It Happened in Hollywood—Columbia (67 m.).....	146
It's All Yours—Columbia (80 min.).....	134
It's Love I'm After—Warner Bros. (90 min.).....	183
Joy Parade, The—20th Century-Fox (See "Life Begins in College").....	162
King Solomon's Mines—Gaumont-Brit. (75½ m.)...	118
Knight Without Armor—United Artists (107 m.)...	118
Lady Escapes, The—20th Century-Fox (63 min.)....	110
Lady Fights Back, The—Universal (63 min.).....	167
Lancer Spy—20th Century-Fox (83 min.).....	167
Last Gangster, The—MGM (81 min.).....	191
Law for Tombstone—Universal (59 m.)....	Not Reviewed
Lawman is Born—Republic (61 m.).....	Not Reviewed
Legion of Missing Men—Mono. (62 m.)..	Not Reviewed
Life Begins in College—20th Cent.-Fox (93 m.).....	162
Life Begins with Love—Columbia (68 min.).....	166
Life of Emile Zola, The—Warner Bros. (116 m.).....	139
Life of the Party, The—RKO (76½ min.).....	147
Live, Love and Learn—MGM (78 min.).....	182
Living on Love—RKO (61 min.).....	179
London By Night—MGM (67½ min.).....	134
Love in a Bungalow—Universal (66 min.).....	111
Love Is on the Air—First Nat'l. (59 min.).....	159
Love on Toast—Paramount (64½ min.).....	198
Love Takes Flight—Grand National (70 m.).....	139
Love Under Fire—20th Century-Fox (75 min.).....	135
Lovely to Look At—20th Cent.-Fox (See "Thin Ice")	146
Luck of Roaring Camp—Monogram (59 m.)	Not Reviewed



Madame X—MGM (71 min.)	166
Make a Wish—RKO (76 min.)	147
Man Behind the Law, The—Columbia (See "Counsel for Crime")	155
Man from the Big City, The—20th Century-Fox (See "It Happened Out West")	83
Man Who Cried Wolf, The—Universal (65 min.)	143
Manhattan Merry-Go-Round—Republic (83 min.)	191
Married Before Breakfast—MGM (70½ min.)	106
Marry the Girl—Warner Bros. (67 min.)	130
Meet the Boy Friend—Republic (62 min.)	126
Merry Go Round of 1938—Universal (85 min.)	190
Midnight Madonna—Paramount (64 min.)	111
Missing Witnesses—First National (61 min.)	198
Mountain Music—Paramount (77 min.)	110
Mr. Boggs Steps Out—Grand National (69 min.)	194
Mr. Dodd Takes the Air—First National (85 min.)	135
Murder in Greenwich Village—Columbia (66 min.)	182
Murder on Diamond Row—United Artists (76 min.)	190
Murderers Welcome—Columbia (See "Under Suspicion")	206
Music For Madame—RKO (80½ min.)	154
My Dear Miss Aldrich—MGM (73 min.)	158
Mystery of the Hooded Horsemen—Grand National (60 min.)	Not Reviewed
Navy Blue and Gold—MGM (93 min.)	190
New Faces of 1937—RKO (99 min.)	115
Night Club Scandal—Paramount (73 min.)	179
Non-Stop New York—Gaumont-British (69 min.)	199
Nothing Sacred—United Artists (74 min.)	199
Old Wyoming Trail, The—Columbia (56m.)	Not Reviewed
On Again Off Again—RKO (67 min.)	122
On Such a Night—Paramount (72 min.)	159
Once a Hero—Columbia (See "It Happened in Hollywood")	146
100 Men and a Girl—Universal (84 min.)	151
One Man Justice—Columbia (59 m.)	Not Reviewed
One Mile from Heaven—20th Century-Fox (67½ m.)	130
Outer Gate, The—Monogram (62 min.)	146
Outlaws of the Orient—Columbia (61 min.)	142
Over the Goal—First National (62 min.)	171
Paid to Dance—Columbia (55 min.)	186
Paradise Isle—Monogram (72 min.)	122
Partners in Crime—Paramount (61½ min.)	167
Perfect Specimen, The—First Nat'l. (96 min.)	170
Portia on Trial—Republic (74 min.)	182
Prairie Thunder—First Nat'l. (54 m.)	Not Reviewed
Prescription for Romance—Universal (64½ min.)	202
Prisoner of Zenda—United Artists (100 m.)	151
Public Cowboy No. 1—Republic (62 m.)	Not Reviewed
Public Wedding—Warner Bros. (58 min.)	115
Quick Money—RKO (59 min.)	198
Radio Murder Mystery, The—First National (See "Love is on the Air")	159
Range Defenders—Republic (56 m.)	Not Reviewed
Red Rope—Republic (60 min.)	Not Reviewed
Renfrew of the Royal Mounted—Grand Nat'l. (57 m.)	166
Reported Missing—Universal (62 min.)	127
Rhythm in the Clouds—Republic (63 min.)	107
Riders of the Dawn—Monogram (53 m.)	Not Reviewed
Ridin' The Lone Trail—Republic (56 min.)	Not Reviewed
Riding on Air—RKO (71 min.)	107
Road Back, The—Universal (104 min.)	107
Roaring Timber—Columbia (65 min.)	142
Roll Along Cowboy—20th Century-Fox (55 min.)	Not Reviewed
Rustlers' Valley—Paramount (59½ m.)	Not Reviewed
Salute to Romance—RKO (See "Annapolis Salute")	154
San Quentin—First National (69½ min.)	130
Saratoga—MGM (91½ min.)	123
Saturday's Heroes—RKO (60 min.)	158
Sea Racketeers—Republic (63 min.)	143
Second Honeymoon—20th Century-Fox (79 min.)	191
Shadow Strikes, The—Gr. Nat'l. (61 m.)	Not Reviewed
She Asked For It—Paramount (68 min.)	167
Sheik Steps Out, The—Republic (67 min.)	151
She Loved a Fireman—First National (57 min.)	203
She Married an Artist—Columbia (78 min.)	202
She's No Lady—Paramount (61 min.)	138
Sh! The Octopus—First National (54 min.)	203
Singing Marine, The—Warner Bros. (104 min.)	111
Slim—Warner Bros. (86 min.)	106
Small Town Boy—Grand National (60½ min.)	139
Some Blondes Are Dangerous—Universal (64 min.)	186
Something to Sing About—Grand National (91½ m.)	150

Sophie Lang Goes West—Paramount (61 min.)	159
Souls At Sea—Paramount (97 min.)	131
Springtime in the Rockies—Rep. (61 min.)	Not Reviewed
Stage Door—RKO (90 min.)	154
Stand-In—United Artists (89 min.)	175
Stars Over Arizona—Monogram (62 m.)	Not Reviewed
Stella Dallas—United Artists (105 min.)	131
Submarine D-1—First National (98 min.)	195
Super Sleuth—RKO (69 min.)	118
Sweetheart of the Navy—Grand Nat'l. (61½ m.)	115
Swing It Sailor—Grand National (62 min.)	186
Talent Scout—First Nat'l. (62 min.)	122
Tex Rides with the Boy Scouts—Grand National (66 min.)	Not Reviewed
Texas Trail—Paramount (58½ min.)	Not Reviewed
Thank You, Mr. Moto—20th Century-Fox (67 min.)	206
Thanks For Everything—Columbia (See "It's All Yours")	134
That Certain Woman—First National (93 min.)	143
That Navy Spirit—Paramount (See "Hold 'Em Navy")	187
That's My Story—Universal (62 min.)	183
There Goes the Groom—RKO (64 min.)	163
They Won't Forget—First Nat'l. (94 min.)	123
Thin Ice—20th Century-Fox (78 min.)	146
Think Fast Mr. Moto—20 Cent.-Fox (66 m.)	139
Thirteenth Man, The—Monogram (70 min.)	119
This Way Please—Paramount (72 min.)	170
Thoroughbreds Don't Cry—MGM (79 min.)	199
Thrill of a Lifetime—Paramount (75½ min.)	194
Thunder Trail—Paramount (53 min.)	Not Reviewed
Toast of New York—RKO (108 min.)	127
To-morrow's Hero—Monogram (See "Hoosier Schoolboy")	115
Topper—MGM (96 min.)	126
Trailin' Trouble—Grand Nat'l. (57 m.)	Not Reviewed
Trapped by G-Men—Columbia (64½ min.)	170
Trigger Trio—Republic (55 min.)	Not Reviewed
Trouble At Midnight—Universal (68 min.)	Not Reviewed
True Confession—Paramount (83 min.)	203
Two Who Dared—Grand National (72½ min.)	118
Under Suspicion—Columbia (63 min.)	206
Varsity Show—Warner Bros. (121 min.)	147
Victoria the Great—RKO (113 min.)	158
Walter Wanger's Vogues of 1938—U. A. (108 m.)	139
Wee Willie Winkie—20th Century-Fox (99 min.)	123
Wells Fargo—Paramount (115 min.)	206
Westbound Limited—Universal (65 min.)	123
Western Gold—20th Century-Fox (58 m.)	Not Reviewed
Westland Case, The—Universal (62 min.)	178
West of Shanghai—1st Nat'l. (65 min.)	183
Where Trails Divide—Monogram (59 m.)	Not Reviewed
Wife, Doctor and Nurse—20th Cent.-Fox (84½ m.)	158
Wild and Woolly—20th Century-Fox (63½ m.)	146
Wild Horse Rodeo—Republic (57 min.)	Not Reviewed
Wild Money—Paramount (68 min.)	119
Windjammer—RKO (57 min.)	131
Wine, Women and Horses—Warner Bros. (63½ m.)	146
Women Men Marry—MGM (60 min.)	159
Wrong Road, The—Republic (61 min.)	171
Yesterday's Hero—Mono. (See "Hoosier Schoolboy")	115
You Can't Have Everything—20th Cent.-Fox (98½m.)	135
You're a Sweetheart—Universal (94 min.)	207
You're Only Young Once—MGM (76½ min.)	207
Youth on Parole—Republic (62 min.)	166

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

8281 Hollywood Roundup—Buck Jones (64 min.)	Nov. 16
8008 She Married an Artist—Boles-Desti	Nov. 25
8028 All American Sweetheart—Colton-Farr	Nov. 30
8004 I'll Take Romance—Moore-Douglas	Dec. 1
8035 The Shadow—Quigley-Hayworth	Dec. 9
8282 Headin' East—Buck Jones (67 min.)	Dec. 13
8024 Under Suspicion—Jack Holt	Dec. 16
8202 Outlaws of the Prairie—C. Starrett	Dec. 31
8034 Women in Prison—Cahoon-Colton	Jan. 1
No Time to Marry—Arlen-Astor	Jan. 10

## First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

270 She Loved a Fireman—Foran-Sheridan	Dec. 18
274 The Patient in Room 18—Knowles-Sheridan	Jan. 8
253 Hollywood Hotel—Powell-Lane (reset)	Jan. 15



## Gaumont-British Features

(1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

### 1936-37 Season

Gangway—Jessie Matthews (reset) .....Sept. 1  
Dr. Syn—George Arliss (reset) .....Oct. 15  
Sez O'Reilly to MacNab—Fyffe-Mahoney .....Nov. 20

### Beginning of 1937-38 Season

Non-Stop New York—Anna Lee-John Loder (re.) Nov. 17  
Look Out For Love—Neagle-Carmanati (reset) ..Dec. 24

## Grand National Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

### Beginning of 1937-38 Season

203 Sweetheart of the Navy—Linden-Parker (released also in the 1936-37 season, as No. 123) .....June 18  
209 Hideout in the Alps—Baxter-Bushell .....July 23  
201 The Girl Said No—Hervey-Armstrong .....Sept. 3  
204 Boots of Destiny—Ken Maynard (56 min.) ....Sept. 3  
202 The Shadow Strikes—LaRocque (61 min.) ....Sept. 10  
206 Love Takes Flight—Cabot-Roberts .....Sept. 17  
205 Small Town Boy—Erwin-Compton .....Sept. 24  
208 Trailin' Trouble—Ken Maynard (57 min.) ....Sept. 24  
210 Something to Sing About—James Cagney ....Sept. 30  
212 Renfrew of the Royal Mounted—Newill .....Oct. 8  
213 Wallaby Jim of the Islands—Houston .....Oct. 15  
211 Here's Flash Casey—Linden-Mallory .....Oct. 22  
214 Tex Rides with the Boy Scouts—Ritter .....Oct. 29  
215 Swing It Sailor—W. Ford-Jewell .....Nov. 5  
216 Mr. Boggs Buys a Barrel (Mr. Boggs Steps Out)—Erwin-Chandler .....Nov. 12  
220 (217) Frontier Town—Tex Ritter (58 min.) Nov. 19  
207 King of the Sierras—Thunder Horse (Released also in the 1936-37 season, as No. 131) .....Nov. 26

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

813 Thoroughbreds Don't Cry—Rooney-Garland...Nov. 26  
814 Beg, Borrow or Steal (A Matter of Pride)—F. Morgan-Rice-Beal (reset) .....Dec. 3  
815 You're Only Young Once (Second Family Affair)—Stone-Rooney-Parker (reset) .....Dec. 10  
No release set for .....Dec. 17  
816 Rosalie—E. Powell-Eddy-Bolger .....Dec. 24  
812 Bad Man of Brimstone—Beery-Bruce (reset) ..Dec. 31  
817 Man-Proof (The Four Marys)—Loy-Russell-Tone-Pidgeon (reset) .....Jan. 7  
818 Three Men in the Snow—Young-Morgan-Rice Jan. 14

## Monogram Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3743 Boy of the Streets—Jackie Cooper .....Nov. 10  
3708 County Fair—J. Farrell MacDonald .....Nov. 24  
3731 Romance of the Rockies—Keene (53 min.) ..Dec. 15  
3722 Telephone Operator—Allen-White .....Jan. 5  
3727 West of Rainbow's End—McCoy No. 1 .....Jan. 12  
3724 Saleslady—Nagel-Heyburn .....Jan. 26  
3736 Where the West Begins—Randall .....Feb. 2  
3719 My Old Kentucky Home—Venable-Hall .....Feb. 9  
(3712 "Marines Are Here," listed in the last Index as a November 17 release, has been postponed.)

## Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

3717 Night Club Scandal—Overman-Barrymore...Nov. 19  
3718 (3720) Blossoms on Broadway—Arnold (re.) Nov. 19  
3719 Ebb-Tide—Homolka-Millard-Farmer .....Nov. 26  
3754 Texas Trail—Boyd-Hayes (58½ min.) .....Nov. 26  
3720 Love on Toast—Payne-Ardler (reset) .....Dec. 3  
3721 Born to the West—Wayne-Brown-Hunt (50 m.) (reset) .....Dec. 10  
3765 Lives of a Bengal Lancer—reissue .....Dec. 10  
3722 Daughter of Shanghai—Wong-Ahn (62 m.) Dec. 17  
3723 True Confession—Lombard-MacMurray ....Dec. 24  
3724 Wells Fargo—McCrea-Dee-Burns .....Dec. 31  
Bulldog Drummond's Revenge—Barrymore ..Jan. 7  
Every Day's a Holiday—West-Lowe .....Jan. 14  
Thrill of a Lifetime (production No. 3718 has been taken away from "Thrill of a Lifetime" and given to "Blossoms on Broadway")—Grable-Downs-Whitney (reset) .....Jan. 21  
3755 Partners of the Plains—Wm. Boyd .....Jan. 28  
(*"The Big Broadcast of 1938," listed in the last Index as a December 31 release, has been postponed.*)

## Republic Features

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

### 1936-37 Season

6001 Portia on Trial—Inescort-Abel .....Oct. 18  
(2 more to come)

### 1937-38 Season

7122 Ridin' the Lone Trail—Bob Steele (56 m.)...Nov. 1  
7101 Springtime in the Rockies—Autry (61 m.) ..Nov. 15  
7018 The Duke Comes Back—Lane-Angel-Tobin...Nov. 22  
7113 Wild Horse Rodeo—Three Mesq. (57 m.) ...Nov. 29  
7017 Glamorous Night—Kruger-Ellis-Jory (61m.) Dec. 6  
7123 Colorado Kid—Bob Steele (56 min.) .....Dec. 13  
7019 Exiled to Shanghai—Ford-Travis (65 m.)...Dec. 20  
Lady Behave—Eilers-N. Hamilton .....Jan. 5  
7124 Paroled to Die—Bob Steele .....Jan. 10  
Old Barn Dance—Gene Autry .....Jan. 15

## RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

### 1936-37 Season

738 Damsel in Distress—Astaire-Fontaine .....Nov. 19  
(more to come)

### 1937-38 Season

810 High Flyers—Wheeler-Woolsey-Velez .....Nov. 26  
812 Danger Patrol—Beal-Eilers-Carey .....Dec. 3  
811 Quick Money—Fred Stone .....Dec. 10  
814 Hitting a New High—Pons-Oakie-Howard...Dec. 24  
815 Wise Girl—Hopkins-Milland-Abel .....Dec. 30  
818 She's Got Everything—Sothorn-Raymond...Dec. 31  
816 Crashing Hollywood—L. Tracy-Woodbury ...Jan. 7

## Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

824 Borrowing Trouble—Prouty-Byington .....Dec. 10  
No release set for .....Dec. 17  
831 Thank You, Mr. Moto—Lorre-Regan .....Dec. 24  
825 Love and Hisses—Winchell-Bernie-Simon...Dec. 31  
833 City Girl—Brooks-Cortez-Wilcox .....Jan. 7  
823 Tarzan's Revenge—Morris-Holm (reset) ....Jan. 7  
829 Headline Huntress—Whalen-Stuart .....Jan. 14  
828 Hawaiian Buckaroo—Ballew-Knapp-Regas ...Jan. 14

## United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Farewell Again—Banks-Robson (83 min.) .....Oct. 8  
Stand-In—Howard-Blondell-Bogart .....Oct. 29  
52nd Street—Baker-Paterson-Carrillo .....Nov. 19  
Nothing Sacred—Lombard-March-Connolly .....Nov. 26  
Murder on Diamond Row—Lowe-Shaw (reset) ..Dec. 10  
The Hurricane—Lamour-Hall-Astor .....Dec. 24  
Action For Slander—Brook-Todd (83 m.) (re.) ...Jan. 14

## Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

### 1936-37 Season

A1006 Reported Missing—Gargan-Rogers .....Aug. 15  
(more to come)

### 1937-38 Season

A2034 That's My Story—Morgan-Lundigan.....Oct. 24  
A2024 The Westland Case—Foster-Hughes .....Oct. 31  
A2015 A Girl With Ideas—Barrie-Pidgeon .....Nov. 7  
A2006 Merry Go Round of 1938—Mischa Auer ....Nov. 14  
A2052 Boss of Lonely Valley—B. Jones (59 m.) ..Nov. 14  
A2018 Some Blondes Are Dangerous—Gargan...Nov. 28  
A2054 Courage of the West—Bob Baker (57 m.)...Dec. 5  
A2036 Adventure's End—John Wayne (63m.) (re.) Dec. 5  
A2013 Prescription for Romance—Barrie (re.) ...Dec. 12  
A2053 Sudden Bill Dorn—Buck Jones (59 m.) ...Dec. 19  
A2004 You're a Sweetheart—Faye-Murphy .....Dec. 26  
The Spy Ring—Hall-Wyman .....Jan. 2  
The Jury's Secret—Taylor-Wray .....Jan. 16

## Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

201 Tovarich—Colbert-Boyer-Rathbone .....Dec. 25  
216 Sergeant Murphy—Reagan-Maguire (57 m.) ..Jan. 1

## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE Columbia—One Reel

8802 Set 'Em Up—Sport Thrills (9½ m.) .....Oct. 29  
8903 Timberland Revels—R'way Follies (10 m.) ..Nov. 5  
8602 Silver Threads—Stra. As It Seems (10½ m.) Nov. 12  
8853 Screen Snapshots No. 3—(9½ min.) .....Nov. 18  
8701 Railroad Rhythm—K. Kat (6½ min.) .....Nov. 20  
8654 Community Sing No. 4—(10½ min.) .....Nov. 28



8754 Scrappy's News Flashes—Scrappys (6 m.)...Dec. 8  
 8603 The Boy Who Saved a Nation—Strange As It  
 Seems (10 min.) .....Dec. 10  
 8904 Brokers' Follies—B'way Follies (10½ m.) ..Dec. 15  
 8803 Cadet Champions—World of Sport .....Dec. 17  
 8503 Hollywood Picnic—Color Rhapsody .....Dec. 18  
 8854 Screen Snapshots No. 4—(10 min.) .....Dec. 24  
 8552 El Salvador—Around the World .....Dec. 30

### Columbia—Two Reels

8403 The Sitter-Downers—Stooge com. (15½ m.) Nov. 26  
 8134 Murder at Sea—Jungle No. 14 (20½ m.) ....Dec. 1  
 8141 The Howl of the Wolf—Mysterious Pilot No. 1  
 (29 min.) .....Dec. 4  
 8135 Give 'Em Rope—Jungle No. 15 (21 m.) .....Dec. 8  
 8425 He Done His Duty—All star com. (17½ m.) Dec. 10  
 8142 The Web Tangles—Pilot No. 2 (23½ m.) ...Dec. 11  
 8143 Enemies of the Air—Pilot No. 3 .....Dec. 18  
 8426 Man Bites Love Bug—All star com. (18 m.) Dec. 24  
 8144 In the Name of the Law—Pilot No. 4 .....Dec. 25  
 8145 The Crackup—Pilot No. 5 .....Jan. 1  
 8404 Termites of 1938—Stooges comedy .....Jan. 7  
 8146 The Dark Hour—Pilot No. 6 .....Jan. 8  
 8147 Wings of Destiny—Pilot No. 7 .....Jan. 15  
 8427 Fiddling Around—All star com (17½ m.) ....Jan. 21  
 8148 Battle in the Sky—Pilot No. 8 .....Jan. 22

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

#### 1936-37 Season

S-568 Romance of Radium—Pete Smith (10 m.) ..Oct. 23  
 W-538 Little Buck Cheeser—Happy Harm. ....Dec. 18  
*(more to come)*

#### 1937-38 Season

H-721 The King Without a Crown—Historical  
 Mysteries (9 min.) .....Oct. 9  
 C-732 Pigskin Palooka—Our Gang (11 m.) .....Oct. 23  
 T-653 Chile, Land of Charm—Travel. (9 min.) ...Oct. 30  
 F-752 A Night at the Movies—Benchley (10 m.) ..Nov. 6  
 C-733 Mail and Female—Our Gang (11 min.) ...Nov. 13  
 H-722 The Man in the Barn—His. Myst. (10 m.) Nov. 20  
 S-701 Decathlon Champion—Pete Smith (10 m.) Nov. 20  
 T-654 Copenhagen—Traveltalks (9 min.) .....Nov. 27  
 S-702 Candid Cameramanics—P. Smith .....Dec. 11  
 T-655 Land of the Incas—Traveltalks (9 min.) ...Dec. 25  
 M-671 What Do You Think No. 2—Miniatures ...Dec. 25  
 S-703 Friend Indeed—Pete Smith .....Jan. 1  
 T-656 Natural Wonders of the West—Travel. ....Jan. 22

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

C-241 The Perfect Day—Laurel-Hardy re. (20m.) Dec. 11  
 R-601 Our Gang Follies of 1938—Musical .....Dec. 18  
 C-418 County Hospital—Laurel-Hardy reissue ...Jan. 22

#### Specials

J-771 Jimmy Fidler's Personality Parade (20 m.)..Jan. 8

### Paramount—One Reel

J7-2 Popular Science No. 2—(10 min.) .....Nov. 12  
 A7-5 From the Minuet to the Big Apple—Headliner  
 (10 min.) .....Nov. 19  
 E7-4 Protek the Weakerist—Popeye (7½ min.) ..Nov. 19  
 T7-2 The Foxy Hunter—Betty Boop (7 min.) ...Nov. 26  
 S7-2 Magic on Broadway—Screen song (7½ m.) Nov. 26  
 EE7-1 Popeye the Sailor Meets Ali Baba's Forty  
 Thieves—Special (17 min.) .....Nov. 26  
 V7-5 Tuna—Paraphraphics (9½ min.) .....Dec. 3  
 P7-5 Paramount Pictorial No. 5—(9 min.) .....Dec. 3  
 R7-5 Ball Tossers—Sportlight (9½ min.) .....Dec. 3  
 L7-3 Unusual Occupations No. 3—(9½ min.) ...Dec. 10  
 A7-6 Oh Kay, Rhythm—Headliner (9 min.) .....Dec. 17  
 E7-5 Fowl Play—Popeye (7 min.) .....Dec. 17  
 T7-5 Zula Hula—Betty Boop (6½ min.) .....Dec. 24  
 V7-6 Accent on Beauty—Paraphraphics .....Dec. 31  
 R7-6 Water, Water Everywhere—Sport. (9 m.) ..Dec. 31  
 C7-3 Little Lamby—Color Classic .....Dec. 31  
 A7-7 Meet the Maestros—Headliner .....Jan. 7  
 P7-6 Paramount Pictorial No. 6 .....Jan. 7  
 J7-3 Popular Science No. 3 .....Jan. 14

### RKO—One Reel

84602 Pathe Parade—(11 min.) .....Nov. 5  
 84103 The Old Mill—Disney cart. (9 min.) .....Nov. 5  
 84202 Phony Boy—Nu Atlas Musical (11 m.) ....Nov. 19  
 84104 Pluto's Quinpupelets—Disney (8½ m.) ....Nov. 26  
 84105 Donald's Ostrich—Disney cart. (9 m.) .....Dec. 10  
 84106 Lonesome Ghosts—Disney cart (9 m.) .....Dec. 24  
 84603 Pathe Parade .....Dec. 31  
 84203 Sweet Shoe—Nu Atlas Musical .....Jan. 14

### RKO—Two Reels

83104 March of Time No. 4—(20 min.) .....Nov. 26  
 83501 Harris in the Spring—Phil Harris (20 m.) Dec. 3  
 83301 Rhythm Ranglers—Smart Set (19 m.) ....Dec. 17  
 83105 March of Time .....Dec. 24  
 83703 The Dummy Owner—Leon Errol .....Jan. 7  
 83106 March of Time .....Jan. 21  
 83403 Ears of Experience—E. Kennedy (18 m.)...Jan. 28

### Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

4704 Italian Libya—Road Romance (10 m.) .....Nov. 12  
 8907 (8905) Calling All Crooners—Song Comedy hit  
 (10½ min.) .....Nov. 19  
 8906 Trailer Paradise—Cabin Kids (8½ min.) ...Nov. 26  
 8508 The Timid Rabbit—Terry-Toon (6½ m.) ..Nov. 26  
 2605 Filming Nature's Wonders—Adv. News  
 Cameraman (8½ min.) .....Dec. 3  
 8603 Not So Dumb—Treasure Chest (9 min.) ...Dec. 10  
 8509 The Billy Goat's Whiskers—T. Toon (6½m.) Dec. 10  
 4705 The Land of the Maple Leaf—Road to Romance  
 (9½ min.) .....Dec. 10  
 8909 How To Dance the Shag—Song Hit .....Dec. 17  
 8605 Grey Owl's Little Brother—T. Toon .....Dec. 24  
 8510 Barnyard Boss—Terry-Toon (6½ min.) ....Dec. 24  
 8908 Love Goes West—Song Hit .....Dec. 31  
 8511 The Lion Hunt—Terry-Toon .....Jan. 7  
 2606 Trailing Animal Stories—Adv. News (8½m.) Jan. 14

### Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

8111 Hooray for Hooligan—West-Patricola .....Nov. 19  
 8108 Playboy Number One (Bon Voyage)—Willie  
 Howard (17½ min.) .....Nov. 26  
 8202 The Bashful Buckaroo—C. Kemper (20 m.) Dec. 3  
 8110 Koo-Koo Korrespondence Skool—Jefferson  
 Machamer (18½ min.) .....Dec. 10  
 8112 Dime a Dance—Coca-Kaye (19 min.) .....Dec. 24  
 8307 Dates and Nuts—Timberg-Rooney .....Dec. 31  
 8203 Hi Ho Hollywood—Hutchins-Johnson .....Jan. 7  
 8113 Air Parade—Niela Goodelle .....Jan. 14

### Universal—One Reel

A2387 Stranger Than Fiction No. 43 (9 min) ....Nov. 29  
 A2275 The Mysterious Jug—Oswald (7 min.) ...Nov. 29  
 A2374 Going Places with Thomas No. 43 (9 min.) Dec. 6  
 A2276 Dumb Cluck—Oswald (7 min.) .....Dec. 20  
 A2388 Stranger Than Fiction No. 44 (9 min.) ....Dec. 27  
 A2375 Going Places with Thomas No. 44 .....Jan. 3

### Universal—Two Reels

A2791 The Hidden Menace—Radio No. 11 (20 m.) Dec. 13  
 A2792 They Get Their Man—Radio No. 12 (20m.) Dec. 20  
 A2881 Jungle Pirates—Tim Tyler's Luck No. 1  
 (21 min.) .....Dec. 27  
 A2165 Oh, Say Can You Hear?—Mentone (15 m.) Dec. 29  
 A2882 Dead Man's Pass—Tyler No. 2 (21 m.) ...Jan. 3  
 A2883 Into the Lion's Den—Tyler No. 3 (21 m.) ...Jan. 10  
 A2884 The Ivory Trail—Tyler No. 4 (21 m.) ....Jan. 17

### Vitaphone—One Reel

3503 Mysterious Ceylon—Color-Tour (10 m.) ....Nov. 20  
 3303 Danger High Voltage (The Live Corpse)—True  
 Adventures (13 min.) .....Dec. 4  
 3705 Jan Rubini & Orch.—Mel. Mas. (10½ m.) ...Dec. 4  
 3904 Vitaphone Frolics—Varieties (10½ m.) ...Dec. 4  
 3203 Pure Feud—Edgar Bergen reissue (10 m.) ..Dec. 4  
 3404 Woods Are Full of Cuckoos—M. M. (7½ m.) Dec. 4  
 3604 Porky's Hero Agency—L. Tunes (7½ m.) ..Dec. 4  
 3804 Clem McCarthy-Boxers-Dolls—Pictorial  
 Revues (11 min.) .....Dec. 11  
 3405 September in the Rain—Mer. Mel. (6½ m.) Dec. 18  
 3204 Africa Speaks English—Bergen re. (10 m.) Dec. 18  
 3504 Land of the Kangaroo—Color-Tour (10½m.) Dec. 18  
 3304 Alibi Mark—True Adventures (13 m.) .....Dec. 25  
 3706 Henry King & Orchestra—Mel. Mast. (11m.) Dec. 25  
 3505 India's Millions—Color-Tour Adv. ....Jan. 8  
 3805 Ice Cream—Jockeys-Negligees—Pic. Rev. ...Jan. 8  
 3905 Unreal Newsreel—Varieties (9 m.) .....Jan. 8  
 3707 Benny Meroff & Orch.—Mel. Masters .....Jan. 15

### Vitaphone—Two Reels

3002 Man Without a Country—Tech. (21 m.) ....Nov. 27  
 3014 Here's Your Hat (A Tip for Cinderella)—  
 Revues (21 min.) .....Dec. 11  
 3026 One on the House—Gayeties (20 min.) .....Dec. 18  
 3021 Wedding Yells—Murray-Oswald (21 m.) ...Jan. 1  
 3009 Script Girl—Headliners .....Jan. 15

## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES Universal

621 Wednesday ..Dec. 8  
 622 Saturday ....Dec. 11  
 623 Wednesday ..Dec. 15  
 624 Saturday ....Dec. 18  
 625 Wednesday ..Dec. 22  
 626 Saturday ....Dec. 25  
 627 Wednesday ..Dec. 29  
 628 Saturday ....Jan. 1  
 629 Wednesday ..Jan. 5  
 630 Saturday ....Jan. 8  
 631 Wednesday ..Jan. 12  
 632 Saturday ....Jan. 15  
 633 Wednesday ..Jan. 19  
 634 Saturday ....Jan. 22  
 635 Wednesday ..Jan. 26  
 636 Saturday ....Jan. 29  
 637 Wednesday ..Feb. 2  
 638 Saturday ....Feb. 5  
 639 Wednesday ..Feb. 9  
 640 Saturday ....Feb. 12

### Fox Movietone

32 Saturday .....Jan. 1  
 33 Wednesday ....Jan. 5  
 34 Saturday .....Jan. 8  
 35 Wednesday ....Jan. 12  
 36 Saturday .....Jan. 15  
 37 Wednesday ....Jan. 19  
 38 Saturday .....Jan. 22  
 39 Wednesday ....Jan. 26  
 40 Saturday .....Jan. 29  
 41 Wednesday ....Feb. 2  
 42 Saturday .....Feb. 5  
 43 Wednesday ....Feb. 9  
 44 Saturday .....Feb. 12

### Paramount News

43 Saturday .....Jan. 1  
 44 Wednesday ....Jan. 5  
 45 Saturday .....Jan. 8  
 46 Wednesday ....Jan. 12  
 47 Saturday .....Jan. 15  
 48 Wednesday ....Jan. 19  
 49 Saturday .....Jan. 22  
 50 Wednesday ....Jan. 26  
 51 Saturday .....Jan. 29  
 52 Wednesday ....Feb. 2  
 53 Saturday .....Feb. 5  
 54 Wednesday ....Feb. 9  
 55 Saturday .....Feb. 12

### Metrotone News

230 Saturday ....Jan. 1  
 231 Wednesday ....Jan. 5  
 232 Saturday ....Jan. 8  
 233 Wednesday ....Jan. 12  
 234 Saturday ....Jan. 15  
 235 Wednesday ....Jan. 19  
 236 Saturday ....Jan. 22  
 237 Wednesday ....Jan. 26  
 238 Saturday ....Jan. 29  
 239 Wednesday ....Feb. 2  
 240 Saturday ....Feb. 5  
 241 Wednesday ....Feb. 9  
 242 Saturday ....Feb. 12

### Pathe News

85145 Sat. (O.) ..Dec. 25  
 85246 Wed. (E.) Dec. 29  
 85147 Sat. (O.) ..Jan. 1  
 85248 Wed. (E.) Jan. 5  
 85149 Sat. (O.) Jan. 8  
 85250 Wed. (E.) Jan. 12  
 85151 Sat. (O.) Jan. 15  
 85252 Wed. (E.) Jan. 19  
 85153 Sat. (O.) Jan. 22  
 85254 Wed. (E.) Jan. 26  
 85155 Sat. (O.) Jan. 29  
 85256 Wed. (E.) Feb. 2  
 85157 Sat. (O.) Feb. 5  
 85258 Wed. (E.) Feb. 9  
 85159 Sat. (O.) Feb. 12



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Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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No. 2

## THE INDEPENDENT EXHIBITORS' RARE OPPORTUNITY

A feeling of resentment is prevailing in Washington against some of the big business people and against the monopolies. Assistant Attorney-General Jackson recently made a speech over the radio condemning monopolies and laying the blame for the present business recession to their keeping the prices up. Last week, Secretary Ickes made a similar radio speech accusing the "Sixty Families" that rule the American financial world of going "on strike" against the administration. Other prominent members of the Administration, including the President himself, are about to talk to the American people over the radio on the same subject.

The inability of the independent theatre owners to obtain national legislative relief has so far been owed to either hostile or indifferent administrations. During the Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover regimes no independent exhibitor could hope to obtain such relief, for obvious reasons; but during the Roosevelt Administration, every independent theatre owner hoped that he would at last obtain relief. He has, however, been disappointed; for nothing was done for him, either because the administration did not believe that the situation is as serious as the independent theatre owner has presented it, or because the producers employed political influence to prevent the taking of action.

But now that the administration itself is feeling the pressure of big business, just as you have felt it for several years, you should not experience any difficulty in getting its attention and enlisting its aid.

The questions to which you should call the Government's attention, and the correction of which would go a long way toward equalizing conditions in the exhibition field and toward improving the quality of pictures, are two: Block-booking, with its companion, blind-selling, and ownership of theatres by producers and distributors.

As to the former, enough work has already been done in Washington to have made its effect upon independent exhibition clear; it is on the latter that considerable work will have to be done.

Of the two abuses, ownership of theatres by producers and distributors is the worse, and its correction should bring to the independents, distributors as well as exhibitors, greater benefits. It is an abuse in line with the abuses against which the administration is fighting. For this

reason you should exert your greatest efforts on it. And you should have no trouble obtaining the sympathy of the administration if your national leaders should have a theatre divorcement bill introduced in Congress.

Because of the present state of mind of the administration, HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that the next annual convention of Allied States Association be held in Washington, on a date that would prove most profitable to the cause.

The advantage of holding the national convention in Washington this year cannot be lost to every exhibitor leader, for with Congress in session the exhibitors will be able to call their grievances to the attention of the administration and of all the congressmen more forcefully. And they will be able to get much newspaper publicity.

If you agree with these views, write to Mr. Abram F. Myers, chairman of the board of directors and chief counsel of Allied, addressed to him at the Securities Bldg., Washington, D. C., as well as to Mr. Nathan Yamins, president of the organization, in care of Empress Theatre, Fall River, Mass., and make your sentiments known to them. You should take the matter up also with the officers of your local organization.

Let the slogan be: "On to Washington!"

## A RESOLUTION FOR DISTRIBUTORS

Mr. Nate Blumberg, the new president of Universal, in announcing the policies of his company, made some observations that deserve to be considered by all the other major companies; it should profit them greatly if they should adopt the same policies.

Mr. Blumberg stated:

"The new management's policies will be based solely on what is best for the company's exhibitor customers and for its investors. This industry exists on the money taken in at the box-office and, in our opinion, the exhibitor is the most important factor in the business. The money he takes in provides what is essentially a revolving fund which keeps the industry operating.

"Universal will be an exhibitor-minded company. We will not tolerate within the organization anyone who does not have the exhibitor's viewpoint.

"Universal has the good will of exhibitors everywhere. This was demonstrated in a most gratifying manner only recently when we asked

(Continued on last page)



### **"Hollywood Hotel" with Dick Powell and Rosemary Lane**

(*First National, January 15; time, 108½ min.*)

This is the type of musical that should appeal to the masses. The Hollywood background, in addition to the music and comedy, which are incidentally set to a feverish tempo, should keep audiences well entertained. The title alone may draw them in, considering that it is familiar to millions of radio listeners-in, who will be curious to see how the broadcasts from the Orchid Room are managed. Although Dick Powell sings several numbers, the musical burden does not rest on him alone; he is given good support by Rosemary Lane, Frances Langford, Jerry Cooper, and Johnny Davis. The story is thin; but it serves well enough as a means of putting the music and comedy across:—

Dick Powell, saxophonist in Benny Goodman's Orchestra, leaves for Hollywood, there to embark on a motion picture career with a major company that had given him a contract. He is thrilled when told on the very day of his arrival that he was to escort the company's most important star (Lola Lane) to the premiere of her latest picture. He did not know that it wasn't the star he was to accompany but her double (Rosemary Lane); for Lola, owing to a fit of temperament, had refused to go, and so the studio had decided to use her double. Powell falls in love with Rosemary. When Lola finds out what had happened, she is enraged and demands that Powell be discharged immediately; the studio accedes to her wishes. But Powell is happy when he finds out that the girl he loved was not the famous star but just a waitress. Being unable to get placed with a studio, Powell and his self-appointed manager (Ted Healy) take jobs as dishwashers. Powell finally gets an opportunity to sing in a picture; but he does not appear in it, for only his voice was to be used for dubbing purposes so as to make it appear as if the star (Alan Mowbray) were singing. Louella Parsons, an important columnist, is so impressed with Mowbray's voice that she insists he appear on her radio program as a singer; he accepts. Powell is called on again to dub his voice for Mowbray. But Rosemary and Healy arrange things so that Mowbray could not appear; in this way they give Powell a chance to appear before the public. The scheme works and Powell is cheered. He and Rosemary are happily united.

Jerry Wald and Maurice Leo wrote the story, and Messrs. Wald and Leo, together with Richard Macauley, the screen play; Busby Berkeley directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are Hugh Herbert, Glenda Farrell, Mabel Todd, and others.

Class A.

### **"Rosalie" with Eleanor Powell, Nelson Eddy and Frank Morgan**

(*MGM, December 24; time, 122 min.*)

Super-colossal sets, Eleanor Powell's tap dancing, Nelson Eddy's singing, and Frank Morgan's clowning are what "Rosalie" offers; and if that is enough to satisfy audiences, then this picture should go over. But these things are tied together with one of the dullest stories imaginable. The action is slow, the over-abundance of dialogue tiresome, and the comedy, with the exception of Frank Morgan's bits, dull. Only the most true and tried movie fans will be able to sit through the two hours that this runs without yawning. There is one personality, Ray Bolger, who is lost in this picture; although known as a marvelous dancer, he is not even given a chance to show his ability—he is made only to talk until he is "blue" in the face. Eddy's voice is excellent, but he seems ill at ease and acts rather stiffly. The romance is pleasant:—

At a party given for the football stars, Eddy, West Point's star football player, meets and falls in love with Miss Powell, a student at Vassar. She does not let him know that she was a Princess; instead, she informs him that she was going back to Romanza, her country, and asks him to follow her there in the Spring, during festival time. Miss Powell is disconsolate when, on the day of the festival, Eddy does not show up. She knows that her father, the King (Morgan), was urged by the Queen (Edna May Oliver) to announce their daughter's engagement to a Prince (Tom Rutherford), whom she did not love, and who did not love her. She is overjoyed, however, when she hears that an American had flown across the ocean and had landed in her country, for it was none other than Eddy. They meet and confess their love. Eddy is heartbroken

when he learns who she was and returns to West Point. A revolution in their country sends Morgan, Miss Oliver, and Miss Powell to America for safety. On a visit to West Point, Miss Powell requests that Eddy be her escort. She explains everything to him; but still they do not know what to do. Bolger, Eddy's pal, induces Morgan to abdicate and to settle in America. Morgan gladly does so, for he wanted freedom. And so Eddy and Miss Powell are able to marry.

Wm. Anthony McGuire and Guy Bolton wrote the play from which this was adapted; Mr. McGuire wrote the screen play, W. S. Van Dyke II, directed it, and Mr. McGuire produced it. In the cast are Billy Gilbert, Reginald Owen, and others.

Class A.

### **"Sergeant Murphy" with Ronald Reagan and Mary Maguire**

(*Warner Bros., January 1; time, 57 min.*)

Average program fare. Its appeal will be directed mainly to horse lovers, for the story revolves around "Sergeant Murphy," an Army horse. Young folk may enjoy the background of routine Army life. There are a few comedy bits, caused by Ronald Reagan's attempts to discredit the horse so that the Army officials might be glad to sell it to him when his enlistment period expired; he knew that the horse had possibilities for becoming a great jumper. One amusing situation is that in which Reagan hits the horse, which was mounted by the Colonel (Donald Crisp), with a bean from a bean shooter during a dress parade, thereby causing the horse to run wild and upset the parade. The race in the closing scenes, although comprised of stock shots, holds one in fair suspense because of one's desire to see "Sergeant Murphy" win. There is some human appeal in one part; it is brought about by Reagan's unhappiness when one of his pranks causes an injury to his beloved horse. Reagan's devotion to the horse and his patience in training it for the races wins one's good will. It is this devotion that brings about the romance with Mary Maguire, the Colonel's daughter, who, too, thought a great deal of "Sergeant Murphy." The horse's winning of the British Grand National Sweepstakes race not only brings recognition and satisfaction to Reagan, but also becomes the direct cause for his winning of Miss Maguire as his wife.

Sy Bartlett wrote the story, and William Jacobs, the screen play; B. Reeves Eason directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Ben Hendricks, William Davidson, Max Hoffman, Jr. and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Patient In Room 18" with Patric Knowles and Ann Sheridan**

(*First National, January 8; time, 59 min.*)

This murder mystery melodrama is only mild program fare, for the plot is trite and the action drags. Even though the murderer's identity is not divulged until the end, it fails to hold the spectator's attention, for it is not difficult for one to detect who the murderer really is. All the stock tricks are used to create an eerie atmosphere, such as storms, mysterious openings of doors and windows, and the like; but they are not very effective. Although the individual players are competent, they cannot do much with the parts given them. Two romances are woven in the plot, but they are of secondary importance. Most of the action takes place in a hospital:—

A wealthy patient at the hospital is murdered, and radium valued at \$100,000, which had been placed on his chest, stolen. Patric Knowles, a detective who had been confined to the hospital suffering from a nervous breakdown, decides to take charge of the investigation, despite the protests of Ann Sheridan, a nurse, who was in love with him. Several persons are suspected of the crime. In the meantime, another murder is committed. Knowles finally proves that one of the doctors at the hospital had committed the murders; he had killed the wealthy patient in order to get the radium, and then the second man because he had been a witness to the first murder. With the case finished, Knowles settles down to becoming well under the supervision of Miss Sheridan.

Mignon G. Eberhart wrote the story, and Robertson White and Eugene Solow, the screen play; Bobby Connolly and Crane Wilbur directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Rosella Towne, Jean Benedict, Ralph Sanford, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



### **"Mama Runs Wild" with Mary Boland and Ernest Truex**

(*Republic, January 19; time, 65 min.*)

A very entertaining domestic comedy. Mary Boland's artistic acting is responsible for most of the laughter; she is helped along by the well written dialogue, and by the well conceived farcical situations. There are several spots that provoke hearty laughter; as a matter of fact, there is hardly a dull moment. The photography and sound are excellent:—

Miss Boland, leading member of several women's clubs, is the domineering force in her family; her henpecked husband (Ernest Truex) is not permitted to think for himself. She is enraged when he buys a house, without first having consulted her about it. The house is located in a small suburban community, to which Miss Boland complainingly moves. When her daughter (Lynn Roberts) returns from college for a vacation, Miss Boland is annoyed because she had chosen as her friend William Henry, son of the owner of a cocktail bar. While entering the bank to deposit some money, Miss Boland walks right into a holdup. The crook takes her bag, withdraws the money from it, and then gives it back to her. He unwittingly leaves his fingerprints on it, and it is through these that the police are able to trace him and to arrest him. This brings fame to Miss Boland, for the police credit her with having gotten the fingerprints. This starts her off on a campaign to clean up their town; she interests all the women to follow her. They even decide to elect her Mayor. Disgusted with the turn of events, the men band together and demand that Truex run against his wife; the upheaval causes husbands and wives to separate. But peace is restored when Truex is elected overwhelmingly. Miss Boland, heartbroken, prepares to leave her home, but Truex convinces her that he loved her and could not do without her.

Gordon Kahn wrote the story, and he and Hal Yates, the screen play; Ralph Staub directed and produced it. In the cast are Max Terhune, Joseph Crehan, Dorothy Page, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"City Girl" with Phyllis Brooks, Ricardo Cortez and Robert Wilcox**

(*20th Century-Fox, January 7; time, 60 min.*)

A strong, realistic crook melodrama, with an unusual twist. But, because of the theme, it is strictly adult fare. One cannot help feeling pity for the heroine, who, because of her love for luxury and for better surroundings than those in which she lived, associates with the wrong persons and drifts into a life of crime. Although her death in the end is logical, it hurts one; this is perhaps owing to the sympathetic portrayal of the heroine by Phyllis Brooks. One's attention is held throughout, for one knows that the heroine has to pay for her misdeeds in the end. Robert Wilcox wins one's sympathy by his efforts to help the heroine:—

Miss Brooks, a waitress in a cheap restaurant, hates her work and the squalid surroundings in which she and her family lived. To satisfy her yearning for a good time, she accepts the invitation of Douglas Fowley, a petty crook, and his pal (Chick Chandler) to go out with them; she does not tell her fiance (Robert Wilcox), a young struggling attorney, what she was doing. She is horrified when Fowley and Chandler attempt a holdup at a gas station, where, in the excitement, she drops her purse. She is naturally called for questioning, but manages to get out of the mess. Fowley sends her a one hundred dollar bill for the way in which she had handled the situation and, when he invites her, she goes out with him again. Through him she meets Ricardo Cortez, a big-shot racketeer, who falls madly in love with her. He establishes her in a luxurious apartment, gives her beautiful clothes and jewels, and takes her out. He decides to go to Chicago to induce his wife to divorce him so that he might marry Miss Brooks. While he is away, his former mistress (Adrienne Ames) calls to see her, and in an argument she accidentally shoots and kills Miss Ames. She is arrested, tried, and convicted; but Cortez' men, at the point of guns, get her out of the courtroom, and rush her to a hideout. On the way there her automobile is wrecked and she is disfigured. After months of patience and expert plastic surgery work, she is restored to her former beauty. With her hair dyed, she could not be recognized. In the meantime, the police had given her up for lost. When Cortez becomes involved in a racket investigation, Miss

Brooks tries her best to help him. Wilcox, an assistant district-attorney, recognizes her and goes to her apartment to plead with her to give herself up. Cortez enters and draws his gun to shoot Wilcox. Miss Brooks jumps in front of him and receives the bullet; she dies. Cortez is arrested on a murder charge.

Frances Hyland, Robin Harris, and Lester Ziffren wrote the original screen play; Alfred Werker directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Esther Muir, George Lynn, and others.

Unsuitable for children and adolescents. Class B.

### **"Spirit Of Youth" with Joe Louis**

(*Grand National, January 15; time, 66 min.*)

With the exception of prizefight fans, this will have little appeal for the average audience. It should go over, however, in theatres that cater to colored folk, because of the popularity of Joe Louis, the negro fighter, who takes the leading part. The story, production, and acting are amateurish, to say the least. Louis is gawky and ill at ease before the camera, and speaks his lines with difficulty. The only attractive feature is an occasional shot of Louis in the ring, showing him fighting; but even these scenes have been handled poorly.

The story opens showing Louis, the young son of poor parents, being compelled to leave school in order to support his family; his father had met with an accident and was to be bedridden the rest of his life. Louis goes from one job to another until, when grown, a friend realizes his prowess as a fighter. Under the capable management of Clarence Muse, Louis goes to the top. For a time he is in jeopardy of losing everything he had built up because of the schemings of a cabaret singer, with whom he was infatuated, and who was working hand in hand with gamblers, who wanted Louis to lose. But Louis comes to his senses in time to win the championship and to marry the girl who had loved him ever since they were children.

Arthur Hoerl wrote the original screen play; Harry Fraser directed it, and Edward Shanberg produced it.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Lady Behave" with Sally Eilers and Neil Hamilton**

(*Republic, January 5; time, 69 min.*)

A pretty good comedy. Although the story is far-fetched and the plot somewhat involved, one is kept amused because of the sparkling performances by the players. One is in sympathy with Sally Eilers (heroine), who, in an effort to help her scatter-brained sister, almost ruins her own chances for happiness. The misunderstandings in the closing scenes result in exciting and comical action. It all ends to the satisfaction of the spectator:—

When Miss Eilers learns that her fun-loving sister (Patricia Farr), while under the influence of liquor, had married millionaire Neil Hamilton, she is horror-stricken, for Miss Farr already had a husband from whom she had not been divorced. Hamilton, regretting his actions, leaves town, with instructions for his attorney to annul the marriage. Knowing that her sister would be charged with bigamy were Hamilton's divorce proceedings to go through, she decides to take the advice of a friend (Grant Mitchell) to pose as Hamilton's wife. In the meantime, Mitchell would try to contact Miss Farr's husband (Joseph Schildkraut) and attempt to get him to divorce Miss Farr. Miss Eilers goes to Hamilton's home where she finds his two motherless children (Marcia Mae Jones and George Ernest); they let her understand that they resented her presence. Schildkraut, upon learning of the mixup, refuses to go through with the divorce, hoping instead to get a large sum of money from Miss Eilers. He leads the children to believe that he could do what he wanted with Miss Eilers; and so they promise to give him \$30,000 if he would lure her away. Hamilton returns unexpectedly and is pleasantly surprised to find Miss Eilers posing as his wife. He falls in love with her, and is angry when his children tell him what they had done. After a hectic time, during which Miss Eilers tries to run away, everything is settled legally; this leaves the way clear for Miss Eilers to marry Hamilton. The children are happy, for they had grown to love her.

Joseph Krumgold wrote the story, and he and Olive Cooper, the screen play; Lloyd Corrigan directed it, and Albert E. Levoy produced it. In the cast are Warren Hymer, Robert Greig, Charles Richman, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Class A.



for cooperation in the setting of January play-dates for our new product. Big circuits and individual exhibitors responded immediately in the most gratifying and important way of all. They said it with play dates. That good will is one of our most vital assets. The company is rich, too, in manpower. Its studio facilities are the best, its production talent excellent, and its story properties, representing an accumulation of 25 years, are valued at \$5,000,000. Recently, one of the leading companies offered us \$800,000 for a selection representing only a small part of these story properties.

"With assets such as these, Universal has what is to me the greatest future of any company at this time."

This is sound logic. When a manufacturer makes a product for sale, he tries to make that product conform as nearly as possible to the tastes and desires of his customers. He does not design the product merely to please his own fancies, then trying to force it upon prospective buyers by holding a club over them. But in the motion picture industry, that is exactly what the manufacturer of the product has been doing.

Mr. Blumberg now says that his company will deal with its customers, the exhibitors, just as is done in other industries.

The exhibitor, being in close contact with the picture-going public, knows what they want, and if the producers will satisfy the wants of the exhibitor, they will satisfy the ultimate purchaser, the public.

Mr. Blumberg has made a fine start by setting down the policy of his company in this manner. If he will see that it is carried out not only in the letter but also in the spirit, he will be the gainer thereby.

### CAUGHT IN A BEAR MARKET

Some exhibitors have been in the habit of contracting for their new season's products early in June, or in May, or even before those months.

Most of those now regret their haste, for the prices they agreed to pay and the terms they accepted are now out of harmony with the box office receipts. And naturally so, for at the time they bought their products business was at the peak of prosperity, whereas now it is as bad as it was in 1932 and 1933.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that these exhibitors have learned their lesson. If they have, they will profit from it, for the time is soon approaching when the salesmen will be calling on them for the purchase of their 1938-39 season's product.

### A COMPLAINT AGAINST 40% PICTURES

"Contact," the house organ of the Philadelphia zone exhibitor organization, has made the following observation in the issue of November 29, under the heading, "Abolish 40% Pictures":

"Of the five or six hundred features released annually not more than one or two justify a 40% gross. Yet the forty percenter is a red herring in the face of the exhibitor—a constant source of irritation between seller and buyer.

In nearly all cases the forty percenter, after being played, must be adjusted downward to 35% or 30%—sometimes even to 25%. Few pictures today justify a 35% gross—none a forty percent take."

### NO CANCELLATION CLAUSE IN THE COLUMBIA 1937-38 CONTRACT

Many exhibitors, being under the impression that their Columbia contracts contain a ten percent cancellation clause, have sent to their Columbia exchange requests for the cancellation of certain pictures. Invariably the answers they receive are to the effect that the booker cannot understand under what provision these exhibitors make such requests. It is then that they receive the surprise of their lives, for they find out that their Columbia contract contains no cancellation provision.

In the series of articles entitled, "A Study of the 1937-38 Season's Contracts," the first article of which was printed in the August 21 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, the following was said about the Columbia contract on page 136:

"The contract does not contain either a 10% cancellation provision, or an arbitration clause. HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests, therefore, that, before signing an application for a Columbia contract, you insist upon having these provisions incorporated in the contract. It can be accomplished by attaching to each copy of the application a Rider, signed by the exhibitor and the salesman, containing the terms of the aforementioned provisions."

There might be an excuse for exhibitors who are not subscribers of HARRISON'S REPORTS to have overlooked the fact that the Columbia contracts do not contain a ten percent cancellation provision, but there is no excuse for subscribers to have failed to read what was said on the subject, particularly when they had trouble with Columbia also the previous season, in the matter of the Capra pictures, and the fact had been brought to their attention in the interpretation of the 1936-37 season's Columbia contract.

It may be interesting for you to note that, to the 10-point demands made by Ed Kuykendall of the producers, Columbia replied early this year as follows on the point dealing with a "stringless" cancellation provision:

"Columbia is willing to grant a cancellation of 10% of the number of pictures offered if the exhibitor contracts for all the pictures offered at one time, provided this cancellation is restricted to pictures in the lowest allocation group."

Kuykendall certainly cannot feel very proud at the way Columbia has kept its word to him!

### ORDER YOUR MISSING COPIES

During the holidays the copy of an issue or so may have been lost in the mails.

Look into your files and if you find the copy of any issue missing, write to this office and it will be supplied to you free of charge. A sufficient number of copies of many back issues is kept in stock for just such a purpose.



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Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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Vol. XX

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1938

No. 3

## THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF ALLIED OF NORTHWEST

On January 31, February 1 and 2, Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest will celebrate its Silver Jubilee. Hotel Nicollet, Minneapolis, is the place.

Mr. W. A. Steffes, its president, called affectionately by all those who know him as "Al," has invited almost every industry leader to attend, and many of them have already accepted. Paramount will be represented by Neil Agnew, general manager, Y. F. Freeman, head of the theatre department, Charles Reagan, division manager, and perhaps other executives; Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer will be represented by Mr. W. F. Rodgers, and perhaps by Al Lichtman, Bob Rubin, and other MGM executives; RKO may be represented by Ned Depinet; George Schaefer and Jack Schlaifer, of United Artists, have promised to do everything in their power to be there; Nate Blumberg, the new President of Universal, is eager to attend if he should be able to find a lull in his time, which, as every one of you no doubt knows, is occupied sixteen hours out of each twenty-four; Twentieth Century-Fox will no doubt be represented—Harry Buxbaum, an old timer in Minneapolis (he was branch manager of Pathe there once) is eager to go; Ray Johnston and Eddie Golden of Monogram will be there; Herbert Yates, Sr., of Republic, will try to set aside everything to be there; Warner Bros. and Columbia will no doubt be represented. Mr. C. C. Pettijohn will represent Mr. Will H. Hays.

Allied States Association will be represented by many national as well as local leaders. Abram F. Myers and, no doubt, Nathan Yamins will be there.

From outside the industry, there will be Governors, State Supreme Court Justices, state and national legislators of three states—Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and many other state officials.

It is the intention of Mr. Steffes to make this affair a means of bringing together the different elements of the motion picture industry for the purpose of conciliation. And no other exhibitor leader than Mr. Steffes is in a better position to undertake such a mission; with a theatre divorce bill in at least one state to his credit, he commands great respect.

Al Steffes commands respect among the producer-distributors also for another reason—he has stood by his own, the exhibitors, fighting for their interests against producer-distributors, but he has always fought justly and honorably.

And from this fact comes the greatest respect that he commands.

The celebration by Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest of its twenty-fifth anniversary is going to be an outstanding affair, more outstanding than any other exhibitor affair that has been held in the last fifteen years.

If any of you can attend it, do so by all means.

For reservations, telegraph, telephone, or write to Mr. W. A. Steffes, World Theatre Building, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

## ERADICATING "CHISELING" CONCERNS

Frequently I read in exhibitor bulletins requests for information as to the standing of business concerns that are dealing with exhibitors on business-building articles or methods. As frequently, these bulletins warn the exhibitors against this, that, or the other concern, or traveling salesman.

The latest bulletin to deal with such a subject has come from the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio. By it, Mr. P. J. Wood requests information regarding a company that handles "Shirley Dolls" in a tie-up between merchants and theatre owners; a company that has representatives traveling the State of Ohio making tie-ups between merchants and theatre owners involving the "shooting" of local scenes and of subsequently showing them in the local theatres; and an individual who has been traveling in the northern part of Ohio seeking to rent theatres for one night.

It seems as if the exhibitors should have by now learned their lesson from dealing with people they know nothing about, without first communicating with the secretary of their organization for information as to the standing of the company the traveling salesmen represent; most of the times they come to grief.

If the traveling salesman represents a legitimate concern, he will no doubt have credentials, sworn to before a notary public, from chambers of commerce as well as from the secretary of their regional exhibitor organization, not to say from other exhibitors with whom they had done business. If he does not possess such credentials, the chances are that ninety-nine times out of each hundred they are fakers.

This paper suggests to the secretaries of all the exhibitor organizations, in case such matters are called to their attention by exhibitors, to communicate with NATIONAL BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU, Inc., at 405 Lexington Ave., New York City, and with the Better Busi-

(Continued on last page)



**"Every Day's A Holiday" with Mae West, Edmund Lowe and Lloyd Nolan**  
(Paramount, January 14; time, 79 min.)

This is just as brazen and demoralizing as the previous Mae West offerings. Not only does it go in for the typical sexy insinuations for which she is known, but adds to her accomplishments that of larceny and contempt for law and order. Considering the fact that the public was aroused by Miss West's offensive broadcast on a Sunday a few weeks ago, a picture of this type can only add insult to injury. The fact that in the end she reforms does not help matters much. Judged solely on its merits, it lacks entertainment, for the story is thin and silly. The pity of it is that Paramount must have spent a great deal of money in producing it, for the sets and costumes are extremely lavish. The background is New York during the year 1899:—

Miss West, a "con" woman, carries on her crooked work by selling the Brooklyn Bridge to ignorant foreigners. She refuses to heed the advice of Edmund Lowe, an honest detective, to reform. Lloyd Nolan, the disreputable Chief of Police, annoyed because she had refused to become his mistress, issues orders to his men to pick her up. This interferes with her plans to star in a musical revue, which was produced by Walter Catlett, and which was financed by millionaire Charles Winninger, who had been charmed by her. Lowe, in order to save her from arrest, forces her to take a train to Boston. Catlett hits upon the idea of bringing her back, disguised in a brunette wig, and of passing her off as a French music hall star. The idea works for a time, and Miss West is a sensation. But Lowe recognizes her, and again warns her. When Nolan threatens to close the show because Miss West would not go out with him, she pays him a visit at his office and practices her charms on him; he does not suspect who she is. While he is out of the office, she steals from his files papers showing that he had been mixed up in crooked deals; at the same time she takes the file containing records of her misdeeds. Once she has these papers she makes her identity known to him. She convinces Lowe that he should run for Mayor in opposition to Nolan; and she decides to manage the campaign. By giving the people free vaudeville shows and big parades, and by exposing Nolan for the grafter that he was, she wins the election for Lowe. She promises to reform and to marry Lowe.

Mae West wrote the original screen play, A. Edward Sutherland directed it, and Emanuel Cohen produced it. In the cast are George Rector, Louis Armstrong, Charles Butterworth, Herman Bing, and others.

Unsuitable for children and adolescents. Class B.

**"Tarzan's Revenge" with Eleanor Holm and Glenn Morris**

(20th Century-Fox, January 7; time, 70 min.)

Neither from a production standpoint nor as entertainment can this be compared with the Metro "Tarzan" series. For one thing, it is just a rehash of the other pictures, minus their thrills and human appeal; for another, the leading players are not as capable or as appealing as were Johnny Weismuller and Maureen O'Sullivan. Its only good points are the occasional shots showing Miss Holm and Morris swimming. The fact that Miss Holm remains with Morris (Tarzan) at the end, deserting her family, seems so ridiculous, because of the way it is brought about, that audiences may be amused instead of touched:—

George Barbier, his wife (Hedda Hopper), his daughter (Miss Holm), and his daughter's fiance (George Meeker), accompanied by a safari headed by Joseph Sawyer, set out for the jungles to capture wild animals. C. Henry Gordon, a powerful native potentate, seeking vengeance for the insulting way in which Miss Holm had treated him when they had met aboard a ship, pays Sawyer to lead the hunting party into an ambush so that he might kidnap Miss Holm. Before reaching the ambush, Miss Holm goes swimming and meets Tarzan; she is delighted by his naivete. Gordon's plans are finally carried out, and Miss Holm is kidnapped and taken to his palace. Morris finds out where she was taken and rushes to her rescue. He takes her back to her parents, who had decided to set sail for home immediately. Miss Holm tells them that she had fallen in love with Tarzan and would stay with him in the jungles.

Edgar Rice Burroughs wrote the story, and Robert L. Johnson and Jay Vann, the screen play; D. Ross Lederman directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. In the cast are Corbet Morris, John L. Johnson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs"**  
(RKO, not yet set; time, 86 min.)

Excellent! This animated color cartoon of Grimm's fairy tale, produced by Walt Disney, is entertainment that should be enjoyed by every one. Intelligent adults will marvel at the mechanical ingenuity that went into the making of it; and it is something to marvel at, for at times the characters seem almost lifelike. This is brought about by the expert synchronization of the action with the music and the dialogue. For instance, when Snow White dances, her steps are in perfect time with the music; when the Seven Dwarfs sing or talk, the movement of their lips is in perfect coordination with the music and dialogue. In addition, the story has charm, plentiful comedy, and romance; and it holds the spectator's interest throughout. There is no doubt as to the enjoyment children will receive from it; as the action develops, they will probably alternate between tears and cheers. And there is no reason why adults should not react to it in the same way. The picture's novelty alone should draw crowds to the box-office, let alone its value as an entertainment:—

Because her magic mirror had told her that Snow White was the fairest in the land, the cruel Queen, Snow White's stepmother, instructs one of her soldiers to kill Snow White. The soldier, unable to bear the thought of killing the beautiful Princess, begs her to run away. Frightened, Snow White runs through the woods and is guided by friendly animals to the home of the Seven Dwarfs. Since the Dwarfs were not in, she sets about cleaning up the house and cooking their dinner. When they return and find the house clean, they suspect evil spirits, but upon finding Snow White they change their minds and take her to their hearts. The cruel Queen, whose mirror had told her that Snow White was still alive, disguises herself, by magic, as a hag and prepares an apple with a poison that would put Snow White in a death sleep, from which she could be awakened only by a first love kiss. She calls on Snow White and induces her to eat the apple, upon which the young woman falls dead. The Dwarfs, who had rushed home to save Snow White, chase the hag, causing her to fall to her death. Heartbroken, they decide not to bury Snow White, but to place her in a glass coffin. The Prince, who had once seen Snow White and had fallen in love with her, arrives and kisses her on the lips; and, to every one's joy she awakens. Bidding her friends farewell, she goes away with the Prince.

David Hand was the supervising director.

Class A.

**"Invisible Menace" with Boris Karloff**  
(Warner Bros., January 22; time, 54 min.)

A pretty good program murder mystery, suitable for followers of this type of entertainment; it keeps one guessing to the end. The events leading up to the disclosure of the murderer's identity are fairly logical and at times gripping. But the comedy, dealing with the attempts of Marie Wilson and of her soldier husband (Eddie Craven) to spend their honeymoon together under trying circumstances, is at times somewhat offensive. Their romance is, however, an important part of the plot, for it is through Miss Wilson that the murderer is trapped. One is in sympathy with Boris Karloff, who, because he was suspected of being the murderer, is mistreated. The background is an Army Post on a deserted island:—

Craven, an Army private, who had just been married to Miss Wilson, smuggles her to the island where he was posted, even though it was against regulations to do so. In trying to hide her, he takes her to the explosive experimental building, where, to their horror, they find a dead body. The officials are naturally notified, and they start an investigation. The Colonel (Henry Kolker) sends for a special agent (Cy Kendall) from Washington to help him solve the mystery. When Kendall finds Karloff there, he immediately suspects him because he knew that the murdered man had been his enemy—he had stolen Karloff's wife and had been the cause of sending Karloff to prison for eight years for a crime he had not committed. Karloff insists that he was innocent. Miss Wilson inadvertently stumbles on the solution, and the facts come out—Regis Toomey, an officer, is proved to be the murderer. When his victim had discovered that he was doing gun-running on the side, he wanted to be cut in on the profits, and so Toomey killed him.

Ralph S. Zink wrote the story, and Crane Wilbur, the screen play; John Farrow directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Eddie Acuff, Charles Trowbridge, and others.

Unsuitable for children and adolescents. Class B.



### "Everybody's Doing It" with Sally Eilers and Preston Foster

(RKO, January 14; time, 66½ min.)

A mediocre comedy. The story is so thin that, in order to pad it out to a full length feature, the producer had to use up some of the footage in the most stupid type of slapstick imaginable. For instance, towards the end, almost ten minutes are devoted to men slapping and punching each other; for the first minute or so it is funny, but it soon becomes annoying. The hero is presented as so weak a character that one takes no interest in what happens to him; each time he is supposed to work he gets drunk. There are a few other annoying characters (not the fault of the players):—

Preston Foster and Sally Eilers, advertising managers, hit upon the idea of running a picture puzzle contest to boost the sales of their company. The contest takes the country by storm; but when it comes towards the end, Foster, who had been drawing the pictures, tires of the work. He wastes his time at cafes, where he draws pictures for every one who buys him a drink. Miss Eilers, who loved Foster and wanted him to succeed, pays Guinn Williams, trigger man for a gangster, to take Foster up to the country and to hold him there until his work was completed. But Williams double-crosses Miss Eilers by taking Foster to his chief's hideout and making him a prisoner; his purpose was to get the correct answers to the puzzles from Foster, so as to win the first prize of \$100,000. From the drawings sent in by Foster, Miss Eilers knows that something had gone wrong; the pictures give her the clues as to where he was held. She rushes there with the police, and after a hectic battle Foster is released. He goes back to the city, promises to reform, and marries Miss Eilers so that she might keep a watchful eye on him.

George Beck wrote the story, and Jay R. Bren, Edmund Joseph, and Harry Segall, the screen play; Christy Cabanne directed it, and William Sistrom produced it. In the cast are Richard Lane, Lorraine Krueger, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Class A.

### "Checkers" with Jane Withers, Stuart Erwin and Una Merkel

(20th Century-Fox, February 18; time, 78 min.)

Only moderately entertaining. All that remains of the old "Checkers," made by Fox in 1919, is the title and the fact that horse racing is the basis of the plot; not even the name of the author of the original story is listed on the credits. The action is slow-moving, and the picture as a whole may prove disappointing even to the Jane Withers fans. With the exception of the races at the beginning and at the end, little that takes place is exciting or interesting; as a matter of fact, the somewhat far-fetched situations and the homespun atmosphere become pretty tiresome after a while. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

During summer vacations, Jane travels to various race tracks with her uncle (Stuart Erwin). Each fall they return to the farm owned by Una Merkel, Erwin's fiancée, who had been waiting for seven years for him to give up horse-racing; she had refused to marry him unless he did so. She is enraged when Erwin, whose one racing horse had broken its leg during a race, returns not only with the injured horse but also with a young jockey (Marvin Stephens). Erwin pacifies her by leading her to believe that the horse could not race again. In order to show Miss Merkel how mercenary was Andrew Tombes, the town banker, who had been paying court to her, Erwin thinks of a trick: He pours a barrel of oil into the creek on Miss Merkel's farm, and then has his pal make Tombes believe that there was oil on the property. Erwin then informs Miss Merkel about the oil and wagers with her that Tombes would propose marriage without telling her about his "discovery." Miss Merkel throws Tombes out when he calls to propose. Excited about the oil, she borrows \$10,000 with the intention of starting to drill. Erwin, heartbroken at what he had done, decides to race his horse, who had recovered, so as to win enough to pay back the loan. Miss Merkel, having found out from Jane about the hoax, is not resentful. She changes her mind about racing and rushes to the track, there to cheer Erwin's horse to victory. And the horse wins, to everyone's joy.

Lynn Root and Frank Fenton wrote the original story, and Lynn and Robert Chapin and Karen DeWolf, the screen play; H. Bruce Humberstone directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are June Carlson, Minor Watson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "The Jury's Secret" with Kent Taylor and Fay Wray

(Universal, January 16; time, 64 min.)

An interesting program drama. One is held in suspense owing to the fact that an innocent man is tried for murder. The absorbing part of the story is that which deals with the manner in which the real murderer's resistance is gradually worn down, compelling him to confess to the crime he had committed. Although the murder is cold-blooded, one somehow cannot help sympathizing with the murderer because it is shown that his victim was a ruthless financier, who did not hesitate to ruin financially thousands of poor people who had invested in his company. Fay Wray awakens sympathy, for she, although in love with the murderer, is the one who is instrumental in getting him to confess:—

Kent Taylor, who, for many years, had been ghost-writing for Samuel S. Hinds, editor of a newspaper, and who had amassed a fortune thereby, is happy that his contract was over and that he could be a free man again. He is enraged when he receives a note from Hinds, telling him that he had decided to continue running the column and that he would expect Taylor to do the work as usual. When Taylor confronts him, demanding his freedom, Hinds threatens to ruin him financially by wrecking the company in which Taylor had invested heavily unless he continued with the work. In a fit of rage, Taylor stabs him with a letter opener. Just as he was leaving, a poor labor leader (Larry Blake), who had sneaked in to see Hinds to plead with him to sponsor a flood control bill, finds him dead, and is held for the murder. Kent, who had been called on the jury, refuses to join the other jurors in finding Blake guilty; because of his obstinacy, the jury cannot agree, and so a new trial is ordered. Miss Wray, a newspaper reporter, who had been in love with Taylor for many years, finds out about the ghost-writing and suddenly realizes that Taylor was the murderer. Even though it meant losing the man she loved and the happiness she had always wanted, she induces him to confess.

Lester Cole wrote the story, and he and Newman A. Levy, the screen play; Ted Sloman directed it, and Edmund Grainger produced it. In the cast are Nan Grey, Jane Darwell, Halliwell Hobbes, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "Spy Ring" with William Hall and Jane Wyman

(Universal, January 9; time, 60½ min.)

Mild program entertainment. It lacks the excitement and suspense one generally associates with espionage pictures. For one thing, the story is more concerned with the polo-playing feats of the hero than with his activities in the Intelligence Division; for another, the espionage angle is developed so obviously that it is doubtful if it could hold the interest of adults. The closing scenes are fairly exciting:

When his pal, who had invented an important attachment for machine guns, is found murdered, William Hall, Captain in the U. S. Army, knows that it must have been the work of a spy ring, which probably wanted to steal the invention. He is transferred from Washington to the Army Post at Monterey, California, there to finish the experiments on the invention and at the same time to try to discover the identity of the spies. Hall suspects Esther Ralston of being connected with the spies. In order to get the necessary proof, he pretends to be interested in her; this brings unhappiness to Jane Wyman, the Colonel's daughter, who was in love with Hall, as he was with her. Eventually Miss Ralston and her assistants show their hand; they kidnap Hall and Miss Wyman, hoping to get the invention secret from them. Since the device looked like a cigar, Hall is able to dispose of it by throwing it to his chauffeur, pretending he was giving him a cigar. The chauffeur, not realizing that Hall was being kidnapped, is at first surprised. It soon dawns on him, however, what had happened and he rushes after the spies. With the aid of the device, which he attaches to a machine gun, the chauffeur and Hall's pal bring down the plane in which the kidnappers were trying to escape. Hall and Miss Wyman are saved and the spy leaders arrested.

Frank V. Mason wrote the story, and George Waggner, the screen play; Joseph H. Lewis directed it, and Paul Malvern produced it. In the cast are Leon Ames, Ben Alexander, Don Barclay, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



ness Bureau in the Capital or in any other big city of their state. As a matter of fact, they should try to obtain the addresses of all the branches of Better Business Bureaus in their state so that, whenever a traveling "chiseler" calls upon any exhibitor and they are informed of the fact, they may communicate at once with all the Better Business Bureaus of their state.

Since a large number of "Fly-by-Night" concerns have their headquarters in New York City, it might not be a bad idea for these secretaries to communicate also with BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU, Inc., of 280 Broadway, New York.

### THE CASE OF "IN OLD CHICAGO"

"In Old Chicago," the Twentieth Century-Fox picture, which was sold this season, is now roadshown and may not be ready for general release until after July 31, this year.

According to the roadshow provision in the contract, Twentieth Century-Fox has the right to exclude any picture roadshown, either nationally or only in some zones, and the contract holder will not have any rights to it.

Recently P. J. Wood, of the Ohio Allied unit, asked Twentieth Century-Fox whether it is its intention to exclude "In Old Chicago," and received an answer to the effect that the picture will be delivered to all contract holders, even if its roadshowing should extend beyond July 31. The letter is as follows:

"I confirm the understanding which you have received from other sources that we propose, commencing in January, to roadshow IN OLD CHICAGO and we anticipate that such roadshowing may continue beyond August 1st, 1938, which would ordinarily bring it into our 1938-39 release season. However, because of the fact that this decision to roadshow was not arrived at until this fall and prior thereto, holders of our 1937-38 season contracts had reason to expect that they would receive this picture under their contracts and have been given to understand that it is an important picture, Mr. Kent and Mr. Clark have decided that any holder of our 1937-38 season contract will receive the picture under that contract regardless of the date of its release.

"This means, of course, that if in selling our 1938-39 product we should sell away from our old customer in a given situation (which I think you will agree with me is not our practice except for cause) then IN OLD CHICAGO would be expressly excluded from such new 1938-39 season contract so that our old customer could get it under his 1937-38 contract."

The letter was read at the convention of the Ohio exhibitors which was held last month in Columbus, and it created so favorable an impression that the exhibitors passed a resolution, commending Twentieth Century-Fox highly.

The act of Messrs. Kent and Clark is so unusually fair that HARRISON'S REPORTS, too, wishes to join in the commendation, for by it these two executives have set in the motion picture industry a new standard of ethics. They have taken such a decision out of a desire to be fair: many exhibitors had already brought the Twentieth Century-Fox product before the decision to

roadshow the picture was made, and Messrs. Kent and Clark no doubt felt that it would be unfair to take it away from them.

This is the second time that a major company shows a spirit of fairness; the first time it was shown by W. F. Rodgers and Nick Schenck, of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, by the delivery of "The Good Earth," when they could have excluded it if they had seen fit so to do.

The acts of Messrs. Kent, Clark, Nick Schenck, and Rodgers may establish in this industry a standard of fair dealing; certainly the other companies now will not dare to take away from their customers a roadshow picture in defiance of what is morally right. And this may be the beginning of better understanding between exhibitors and producer-distributors.

### DISTRIBUTOR DRIVES ON AGAIN

Under the heading, "DRIVES," a special bulletin of the Philadelphia zone exhibitor organization says the following:

"The distributors are inaugurating 'Drives.' The organization has gone on record against drives of all nature for the reason that they are of no benefit to the exhibitor, and when an exhibitor does cooperate in the drives, such cooperation and help is soon forgotten by the distributor.

"Again the organization repeats that the exhibitor is the only fellow who gets stuck in a drive. He finds himself either overbought or sold for too high a price. No matter how friendly you may feel with the exchanges conducting drives, do not let your personal feelings get the better of your good sound business judgment.

"Think twice and do not join in the 'big push.' It is a wise man who buys what he needs when he needs it! What did these constantly 'driving' exchanges ever do to benefit you in any of their drives?"

The subject of Drives was taken up at the annual Allied convention in Milwaukee last year and condemned. A resolution was passed at that time empowering the president to recommend to each Allied unit to appoint a Committee on Drives, to which there should be referred all requests for such Drives for approval or rejection, and to enjoin all the members from helping any Drive unless it was first approved by such a Committee.

HARRISON'S REPORTS is not in a position to know whether each Allied Unit and all regional exhibitor organizations that are cooperating with Allied have appointed such committees or not; if not, they should appoint them at once.

The question is, not whether the exhibitor derives any benefit from Drives, but whether any harm is done to him. And it is the consensus of opinion that much harm is done to him, by reason of the fact that he has to disarrange his bookings, and is often compelled to play many of his pictures on days that bring him the least returns. Besides, harm is done to all the other distributors, who had to take off play-dates on their pictures to accommodate the play-dates of the company that conducts the Drive.



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Room 1812

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 1938

No. 4

## CAN SAM GOLDWYN BE DEPENDED UPON?

According to Douglas W. Churchill, Hollywood correspondent of the *New York Times*, Sam Goldwyn has gone on a "Sit-Down Strike" with United Artists. For some time he has been negotiating with Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and Charles Chaplin for the purchase of their stock by him in conjunction with Alexander Korda, who had brought English capital with him; and just about when the deal was to go through the three stars backed down. And now Sam Goldwyn threatens to refuse to produce any more pictures for United Artists.

Goldwyn reasons thus: United Artists was formed by stars who wanted to produce their own pictures, the cost of production to be born jointly. With Fairbanks and Pickford not producing at all, and with Chaplin producing pictures at long intervals, the cost of distribution falls largely on the shoulders of his and Korda's pictures, with the Selznick and the Wanger pictures bearing part of the distribution cost.

Sam Goldwyn may be right in his contention, but why should he try to take it out of the exhibitors? In the beginning of the season, United Artists, the distributing organization, announced a certain number of pictures. Among these were a given number to be produced by Sam Goldwyn himself. And the exhibitors, relying on the word of Sam Goldwyn, bought his and the other United Artists product. But now Goldwyn, if the press reports are correct, says that he will not deliver the full number of pictures he announced for the 1937-38 season. Thus the exhibitors will be made to suffer from this "family" quarrel.

The negotiations for the sale of the Pickford-Chaplin-Fairbanks stocks to Sam Goldwyn and Alexander Korda began long before the selling of the 1937-38 season's product had begun. Goldwyn may have felt sure at that time that the deal would go through, but nothing is sure until signatures are attached to contracts. Consequently, Goldwyn knew what he was doing when he was offering to the exhibitors a certain number of pictures. If he should now fail to deliver the full number, he will be breaking faith with them.

The exhibitors are not interested in Sam Goldwyn's private quarrels; they are interested only in the pictures that he has sold them. And they expect him to deliver them, regardless of whether he can or cannot gain control of United Artists; and unless he delivers them, the exhibitors of the United States are going to believe that Mr. Goldwyn does not keep his word.

## THANKS, MR. DISNEY!

The subject that Westbrook Pegler discussed in his January 15 column, which, in New York, appeared in the *World-Telegram*, dealt with "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," Walt Disney's cartoon feature. Mr. Pegler thus opened his column:

"You may think it an extravagant opinion, but I will say that Walt Disney's new film 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,' is the happiest thing that has happened in this world since the armistice and stand on that. There are no words on the keyboard capable of appreciating, much less exaggerating, the beauty of this great artist's achievement in a work which took three years. . . ."

The remainder of the column, which is devoted to this subject entirely, is in the same vein and mood.

If you should have happened to be standing in the lobby of the Music Hall Saturday noon, the third day of the picture's engagement, and watched the faces of men, women and children—particularly of women and children—eagerly waiting to go in, and the faces of those coming out, you would have bestowed upon Mr. Disney's work similar praises, and perhaps warmer, for the picture deserves them.

I don't know how many of you realize what this picture is going to do for the motion picture industry, but this paper will say that all the good-will propaganda that has been done since the inception of the motion picture industry will not equal the good-will that this feature will gain for it, and for those engaged in it, be they producers, distributors or exhibitors. Mr. Disney may well be considered a great benefactor of the motion picture industry.

Walt Disney is modest and conscientious. He shuns publicity, and shuns glory. He feels that he has a job to do; and he is doing it.

"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" will no doubt play in almost every theatre in the United States, not to say of the world, and almost every person who goes to pictures will see it. And millions among those who don't go to pictures, too, will see it. And that is why the picture will do an immense amount of good to the motion picture industry, for every one of those who will see it will go out of the theatre singing the praises of the motion picture industry.

"Snow White" has opened a new world for the motion picture industry; it will bring home vividly of how much benefit can motion pictures be to the peoples of the world, let alone of the

(Continued on last page)



**"Love Is a Headache" with Franchot Tone and Gladys George***(MGM, January 14; time, 72½ min.)*

Fair. Franchot Tone and Gladys George strive to make something out of their parts, but they are handicapped by an unbelievable story, which is interesting only mildly. The picture is good in spots; that is, in the parts that deal with the two orphaned children (Mickey Rooney and Virginia Weidler). Both children provoke hearty laughter by their natural manner, particularly where they are shown refusing to become "soft." And Ted Healy manages to get several laughs in by his customary wisecracks. The trouble with the story is that the comedy is forced to the point of silliness. The romantic interest is fairly appealing:—

Although in love with each other, Franchot Tone, newspaper columnist, and Gladys George, prominent actress, are constantly quarreling. Miss George, having had a series of "flops" to her credit, is happy when she is offered the lead in a new play. But Tone, having read the play, and feeling that Miss George would not suit the part, says so in his column. Because of this, the producer withdraws his offer to her. She becomes infuriated, and berates Tone for what he had done. Healy, Miss George's press agent, realizing that she needed good publicity, conceives the idea of having her adopt two orphaned children (Mickey and Virginia), and proceeds with his plans without telling her about it. Miss George is enraged when she arrives home and finds the two children there; but they soon endear themselves to her. Tone, believing that Miss George had taken the children just for a publicity stunt, becomes angry. He tries to get the Child Welfare League to take the children away; but Ralph Morgan, Miss George's millionaire admirer, vouches for her by saying that she was his fiancée. After much excitement, during which the children disappear and Miss George accuses Tone of having kidnapped them, things are settled by her. She forces Tone to marry her; in that way she not only gets the man she loved, but is assured of being able to keep the children.

The story idea was suggested by Lou Heifetz and Herbert Klein; Marion Parsonnet, Harry Ruskin, and William R. Lipman wrote the screen play, Richard Thorpe directed it, and Frederick Stephani produced it. In the cast are Jessie Ralph, Frank Jenks, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"I Met My Love Again" with Joan Bennett and Henry Fonda***(United Artists, February 11; time, 73 min.)*

A fair romantic drama. It should appeal particularly to high class audiences because of the intelligent dialogue. Although the action is not exciting, one's attention is held well throughout. This is brought about by the sympathy one feels for both the hero and the heroine, who go through much unhappiness until they are finally brought together. At first, the spectator is annoyed with the heroine who, because of her actions, causes the rift in the romance. But later, one comes to respect her, for she does not complain about what she had done; instead, she makes the best of things. The second half is more interesting:—

Joan Bennett is irked by the delay in her marriage to Henry Fonda, a young scientist who was trying to make a place for himself in his field, and, bored by the dull life of the small Vermont town where she lived, longs for excitement. While out during a snow storm she loses her way and seeks shelter in a cabin occupied by Alan Marshall, a writer. His charming manner and sophistication thrill her, and in a moment of haste she agrees to marry him. This brings unhappiness not only to Fonda, but to Dame May Whitty, Miss Bennett's aunt, with whom she had made her home. Marshall is irresponsible; even after the birth of their child he cannot settle down, compelling Miss Bennett to lead his bohemian existence. At a party, Marshall and a friend jestingly decide to fight a duel with what they thought were unloaded pistols. But the friend's pistol was loaded, and so Marshall, hit by the bullet, dies. Miss Bennett is happy when she receives money from her aunt, who wanted her to return with her child. When Fonda, who had become a professor at the college, and she meet, they realize that they had never stopped loving each other, and decide to marry. Fonda's mother tries to stop the match; and so does Louise Platt, a student, who imagined herself madly in love with Fonda. But things are eventually adjusted and Fonda and Miss Bennett finally marry.

The plot was adapted from a story by Allene Corliss; David Hertz wrote the screen play, Joshua Logan and Arthur Ripley directed it, and Walter Wanger produced it. In the cast are Alan Baxter, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Class A.

**"Bad Man of Brimstone" with Wallace Beery, Virginia Bruce and Dennis O'Keefe***(MGM, December 31; time, 88 min.)*

A good Western. Despite a routine plot, it is exciting entertainment by reason of skillful direction and acting; it should thrill the outdoor melodrama lovers, for there is riding, shooting, and fighting; in addition, it has some comedy and human interest. The part of the "Bad Man," which Beery plays, is similar to the parts he has played in other pictures—that of a ruthless, illiterate man, who is nevertheless sentimental. One is held in suspense in the closing scenes; there Beery and his gang are vanquished, and law and order is established. Dennis O'Keefe, a newcomer, plays the hero's part with conviction and makes a good impression. He and Virginia Bruce handle the romantic interest with charm:—

Wallace Beery, an outlaw, known as the bad man of Brimstone, accidentally finds out that Dennis O'Keefe, a young boxer, from whom he had stolen a watch when he had held up the stage coach in which O'Keefe had been traveling with his manager (Guy Kibbee), was his son. He becomes aware of it through the picture of O'Keefe's mother in the watch. Beery does not disclose his parentage; instead, he decides to take O'Keefe under his wing, even though the young man irked him at times. O'Keefe falls in love with Virginia Bruce, daughter of the village lawyer (Lewis Stone); because of her, he decides to remain at Brimstone. He takes the hazardous job of tax collector and, together with Beery, who had insisted on accompanying him, manages to collect all the back taxes. When Beery kills a man who had refused to pay, he becomes so disgusted that he beats him up. In order to save O'Keefe from being killed by the outlaws, Beery insists that Stone send him to a law school with money that he (Stone) supposedly had in trust for him. O'Keefe finishes his course and returns to find Beery and his gang more powerful than ever; he also learns that Stone had become involved in their crooked work and is unhappy. Beery sacrifices his life to help his son establish law and order; the gang is wiped out. O'Keefe marries Miss Bruce.

J. Walter Ruben and Maurice Rapf wrote the story, and Cyril Hume and Richard Maibaum, the screen play; J. Walter Ruben directed it, and Harry Rapf produced it. In the cast are Joseph Calleia, Bruct Cabot, and others.

The shooting and killing makes it unsuitable for children; otherwise good. Class B.

**"The Black Doll" with Nan Grey and Donald Woods***(Universal, January 30; time, 66 min.)*

Just an ordinary program murder mystery melodrama-comedy. It starts off in a pretty interesting manner, holding one's attention well. But the moment the blustering detective, played by Edgar Kennedy, enters the picture, it falls to pieces. The comedy, based on the detective's stupid mistakes and loud-voiced heckling of suspects, changes the mood from that of an engrossing melodrama to a burlesque, all to its detriment, for thereafter the spectator cannot take it seriously. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

C. Henry Gordon, a tyrannical millionaire, is frightened when he finds on his desk a black doll. Thinking that his two former partners (Addison Richards and John Wray) were the only other persons who knew the meaning of the black doll, he sends for them. Upon their arrival he accuses them of attempting to frighten him into parting with his fortune; but they insist that they were innocent. In the presence of his daughter (Nan Grey), Gordon is killed by a mysterious slayer, who had thrown a knife in his back and then had tossed the black doll on him. Miss Grey, frightened, rushes to her sweetheart (Donald Woods), a detective, who had been camping in a trailer nearby. Somebody tries to kill her but she manages to get away. Woods returns to the house with her. During the investigation two more persons are killed. Woods finally solves the case; he proves that the murderer was Holmes Herbert, a doctor, who was in love with Gordon's sister-in-law (Doris Lloyd). He had hoped that with Gordon's death, Miss Lloyd would inherit a fortune. Having found out about Gordon's past, he had used the black doll, which was a symbol of death, to cast suspicion on others. With the case finished, Miss Grey looks forward to a happy life with Woods.

William E. Hayes wrote the story, and Harold Buckley, the screen play; Otis Garrett directed it, and Irving Starr produced it. In the cast are William Lundigan, Sid Saylor, and others.

Hardly suitable for children under twelve. Class B.



### "In Old Chicago" with Tyrone Power, Alice Faye, Don Ameche and Alice Brady

(20th Century-Fox, Roadshow; time, 110 min.)

An excellent box-office attraction. The great spectacle of the fire scenes in the end, showing buildings burning, cattle stampeding, houses crumbling, gas tanks exploding, and panicky people running for their lives, is something that is unforgettable. Another attraction is the interesting era it depicts—that of the start of a great American city. The settings are lavish; and they appear authentic. But the story itself is not so good. The thing against it is the fact that the leading character (Tyrone Power) is a scoundrel, whose actions place him in disfavor with the audience. Even though he is regenerated in the end, it leaves one cold, for up to that time nothing that he does is pleasurable; as a matter of fact, he is indirectly responsible for the death of his brother (Don Ameche), the story's real hero. Alice Brady is very appealing in a serious part. From the first time she appears until the end she displays traits that endear her to the audience. Power and Alice Faye handle the romance effectively. Miss Faye sings a few numbers in keeping with the times. The background is the year 1867:—

In order to support her three fatherless sons, Mrs. O'Leary (Alice Brady) becomes a laundress. Jack (Don Ameche) grows up into a serious minded lawyer, Dion (Tyrone Power), into a politician, and Bob (Tom Brown) becomes his mother's helper. Dion, having accidentally come upon some information about a new street car route, proceeds to benefit from it. He makes the acquaintance of Belle Fawcett (Alice Faye), a singer at the cafe owned by Gil Warren (Brian Donlevy), political boss; she was the owner of a desirable corner plot, where the street car line would run. Backed by a Senator and business men, Dion and Belle open an ornate cafe; Dion becomes the political power for he was able to control the votes. He elects his brother Jack, Mayor. This does not deter Jack from proceeding with investigations into his brother's political stronghold, The Patch. Jack tries to convince Dion that he should change; he even appeals to Belle to help him. Dion marries Belle, disclosing after the ceremony that he had done so to prevent her from testifying should an investigation be brought. This precipitates a fight between the brothers. Mrs. O'Leary, who had heard about the fight, rushes out of the barn, where she had been milking the cow, to go to her sons. The cow kicks over a lighted oil lamp, thereby starting a fire that spreads rapidly. Dion spreads a rumor that Jack had purposely set fire to The Patch in order to ruin him. The infuriated mob sets out to get Jack. In the meantime, Dion learns the truth and tries to save Jack; but in vain. Jack, in his efforts to help stem the fire, grabs a torch to light the fuse to dynamite buildings. Struck by a bullet from the crowd, who had become enraged because of the dynamiting, he is unable to get away in time, and so is blown up. Dion finds his mother with Belle. The three are reconciled; they feel that Jack had not died in vain, for out of the debris would rise a city of steel, ruled by the forces that Jack had advocated.

Niven Busch wrote the story, and Lamar Trotti and Sonya Levien, the screen play; Henry King directed it, and Kenneth Macgowan produced it. In the cast are Andy Devine, Phyllis Brooks, Sidney Blackmer, and others. Class A.

### "Women in Prison" with Wyn Cahoon and Scott Colton

(Columbia, January 1; time, 58 min.)

An ordinary program melodrama. Besides being extremely far-fetched, the story is unpleasant, for an innocent person is made to suffer. The chain of circumstances leading up to the heroine's arrest and imprisonment are contrived so ridiculously, that audiences may be amused instead of touched. As a matter of fact, not one situation is developed logically; the most difficult things are assumed to have been done with the utmost of ease, such as the escaping from prison of the heroine and her pal, and other similar difficult feats; the audience is supposed to just take everything for granted:—

Arthur Loft, head of a gang of criminals, is unable to convince Sarah Padden, warden of the prison in which Mayo Methot was confined, that Miss Methot was worthy of a parole. Miss Methot, who had double-crossed Loft in a bank robbery by running away with the \$100,000 loot, does not want the parole; instead, she is bent upon serving her ten year term and, upon her release, to live in luxury on the stolen money, which she had hidden. Loft frames Miss Padden's daughter (Wyn Cahoon) on a charge of killing a man while she was driving in an intoxicated con-

dition. She is tried and sent to prison; there she is tortured by the other prisoners. Her mother, afraid to show partiality, is unable to help her. Loft approaches Miss Padden with a proposition to clear Miss Cahoon if Miss Methot were released; but she refuses to trade with him. Miss Methot, realizing that an innocent person was suffering because of her misdeeds, decides to help Miss Cahoon. The two girls escape from prison. Miss Methot, who had told Miss Cahoon where the money lay hidden, is killed by the gang. By leading Loft to the hiding place, Miss Cahoon is finally able to trap him into telling the truth. Her name cleared, she is happily reconciled with her sweetheart (Scott Colton), who had helped her to trap Loft.

Mortimer Braus wrote the story, and Saul Elkins, the screen play; Lambert Hillyer directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Ann Doran, Margaret Armstrong, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "Change of Heart" with Gloria Stuart and Michael Whalen

(20th Century-Fox, January 14; time, 66 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare. It is a domestic comedy-drama, unfolding at a leisurely pace; and since the plot hasn't much substance the action is padded by an overabundance of dialogue. It has, however, some pleasant moments, provoked by the charming performance of Delmar Watson, a young boy; he has an ingratiating personality, acts in a natural manner, and speaks his lines well. The scenes on the golf course, where Delmar tries to coach ill-tempered Whalen, are amusing. Incidentally, the photography in these outdoor shots is very good:—

Because of Whalen's uncontrollable temper, his wife (Gloria Stuart) leaves him. Overhearing the conversation between two employees of his advertising agency, by which they had expressed their sympathy for his wife, Whalen asks his trusted manager (Chester Clute) to tell him what was wrong with him. Clute lets him know that he was considered overbearing, ambitious, and intolerant, suggesting that he relax by playing golf. Whalen takes his advice. By association with Delmar, a caddy, who had refused to be "bulldozed" by him, Whalen changes for the better. He meets Miss Stuart on the course; their mutual interest in Delmar brings them together, and for a time it looks as if they might become reconciled. But again his temper gets the best of him—when he finds out that his wife had been supporting herself by posing. Whalen finally comes to his senses: accompanied by Delmar, he follows Miss Stuart to London, where she had gone for a tournament, and begs for forgiveness; they are reconciled.

Frances Hyland and Albert Ray wrote the original screen play; James Tinling directed it and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Lyle Talbot and Jane Darwell. Suitability, Class A.

### "Hawaiian Buckaroo" with Smith Ballew and Evelyn Knapp

(20th Century-Fox, January 14; time, 61 min.)

A fairly good Western. Despite a routine plot, it offers followers of outdoor melodramas the type of exciting action that they enjoy, including fast riding and fist fights; and since the action is supposed to take place in Hawaii, the interpolated native melodies are in order and add to the picture's entertainment value. The photography in the outdoor shots is very good:—

Finding that their services were no longer needed at the ranch where they worked, cowboy Smith Ballew and his pal, ranch cook, pool their savings and buy a pineapple plantation in Hawaii. When they arrive there, they find that the land they had bought was a desolate stretch with no trees, and realize they had been duped. They seek employment at a cattle ranch owned by Evelyn Knapp, whom they had met on the boat to Hawaii. Miss Knapp is up against a gang of crooks who were trying to take her ranch away by bankrupting her; they hoped to accomplish this by preventing her from shipping her cattle to the United States. The conspirators, realizing that Ballew stood in their way, try to frame him in a brawl at a cafe. When Miss Knapp hears of the brawl she angrily discharges Ballew. When the gang tries to prevent her from shipping her cattle, however, he comes to her help. He outwits the gang, and overpowers their leader: the cattle is shipped. Realizing she loved Ballew, Miss Knapp asks him not to leave her again.

Dan Jarrett wrote the story and screen play, Ray Taylor directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. In the cast are George Regas, Pat O'Brien, Harry Woods, and others. Suitability, Class A.



United States. It will make people happy. And when people feel happy they will be less in a frame of mind to tear one another apart, as is the case in many parts of the world.

The number of persons who deserve the thanks of the motion picture industry for having benefitted it because of their pioneering work is large, but none of them deserves its thanks in the same degree as Walt Disney. He has proved a pioneer, in a class by himself.

On behalf of its subscribers and the exhibitors in general, HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to express to Mr. Walt Disney its thanks.

### THE RELATIVE MERITS OF "IN OLD CHICAGO" AND "SAN FRANCISCO"

Exhibitors, producers, distributors and critics—all are discussing "In Old Chicago," each desiring to ascertain whether the other thinks "In Old Chicago" is as good a picture as was "San Francisco"; the theme of the one picture bears so close a similarity to the other that the discussion is a natural one.

In almost every discussion it is determined that "San Francisco" is a far better picture. Not that "In Old Chicago" is not a great picture, for it is; only that "San Francisco" appealed to the heart more powerfully.

Placing "In Old Chicago" in a lesser category than "San Francisco" will not, of course, lose it even a single dollar, for the picture is so powerful a melodrama that every one of those who were to see it will see it just the same. But constructive criticism helps instead of harming, and some producer on the Coast may profit by a discussion of its defects.

The main defect in "In Old Chicago" is the fact that the chief character is a scoundrel. The result is that one does not take a deep interest in his doings; one becomes interested in him only as his acts have an influence upon the others—the persons with whom the spectator is in sympathy. Consequently, when he is seen wandering among the sufferers of the fire, seeking his wife, his brother and his mother, one is indifferent toward him; in those scenes one is impressed only with the realism of the fire scenes—the burning of the buildings, the explosions, and the efforts of the human beings to find safety.

A similar scene is enacted in "San Francisco"; but how different the effect! One travels in spirit with the hero, inwardly praying that he find the heroine; and when he does find her one rejoices, for the hero is presented as a human, weak in the flesh perhaps, but strong in the spirit.

The difference in effect is the result of characterization: both characters are shown as conducting a business in the underworld, but in the case of "San Francisco" the author took care in the very beginning to reveal the hero's soul: when he had the heroine in his clutches, he did not molest her, although no other woman had escaped him. If anything, he had protected her, and when later he was shown to have fallen in love with her the spectator felt that his love was pure.

But what happens in "In Old Chicago"? The scenarist has Tyrone Power trifle with the spec-

tator's emotions, for he had made the spectator believe that Power had repented, and that his offer to marry the heroine was sincere. What a shock then is it to him, the spectator, afterwards when the hero reveals to his brother his real self!—that he had married the heroine only for the purpose of preventing his brother, the Mayor, from having her testify against him in the investigation!

The closing scenes in "San Francisco" moved one deeply—the hero's eventually finding the heroine is surcharged with emotion; whereas in "In Old Chicago" they leave one almost cold, for the one who should have lived dies, and the one who should have died lives.

The producers may justify such a twist in the plot construction by a desire to preserve the great love between the chief character and the heroine. But men of the type depicted by Tyrone Power are incapable of feeling pure love; they feel only passion. Such being the case, the scenarist would have done a merciful act toward the heroine had he killed Tyrone Power and let Ameche live so that two true souls might find happiness in a union. Such a closing should have been most effective, particularly if Ameche has been shown as being secretly in love with Alice Faye, but as being too noble a person to take advantage of his love, since his brother wanted her.

### CECIL DEMILLE AND FILM RENTALS

At the Paramount district managers' convention held recently in New Orleans, Cecil B. DeMille stated that, because pictures today cost more money to produce, the exhibitors must pay higher rentals. They can afford it, he implied, because they are making more money than the producers.

I don't know how the exhibitors present answered him, but if I were there I would have told Mr. DeMille that it would not be necessary for the exhibitors to pay a higher percentage of their intake in order for the producer to receive more money for his pictures; all they need to do is to make better pictures.

HARRISON'S REPORTS tells Mr. DeMille that, if the low quality of the present-day big pictures continues, neither he nor any other producer will be worrying as to what percentage of their receipts the exhibitors should pay, for there will be no exhibitors left—they will all be out of business.

### DOING A DIFFICULT JOB WELL

Nate Blumberg, the new president of Universal, is doing a difficult job well. He is working almost day and night, but he is getting somewhere.

As things now look, Mr. Blumberg will soon restore Universal to its former glory, which it attained by its great service to the theatre owners.

HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes Mr. Blumberg a full measure of success.

### THE SILVER JUBILEE OF THE MINNEAPOLIS ZONE EXHIBITORS

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 1938

No. 5

### GRADWELL SEARS ASPIRING FOR THE ROLE OF INDUSTRY SAGE

Children attract attention by making noise. Elderly persons adopt different methods, but in substance they are the same.

In the motion picture industry, whenever any one wants to attract attention, he issues a statement. If he comes from the coast, he usually issues his statement in the east; but if he is an easterner, he makes such a statement in Hollywood, where he has more chances of creating an impression.

Gradwell Sears, the Warner Bros. general sales manager, went to Hollywood recently to visit the Warner-First National studios and, in order to attract attention, he issued a statement.

And what do you think the statement was about? That the exhibitors are not good showmen! Why? Because they resort to bank nights, country store nights, turkey nights, and other giveaways.

The best answer to Gradwell Sears' publicity outburst has been given by W. A. Steffes, president of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest. According to Motion Picture Daily of January 21, Al Steffes said that the cause of the giveaways is the bad pictures Hollywood produces and that if it had not been for the giveaways and the other kind of premium offerings, the theatres would not be able to make a profit, and some of them might even be compelled to shut down. He further stated that, since Warner Bros. is opposed to giveaways, he has decided to bring the matter before the convention, so as to recommend that no theatre in his territory play any Warner Bros. picture on giveaway nights, particularly if it has been bought on percentage.

In one part of his statement Sears asked: "How can exhibitors expect the studios to give them great productions made at substantial costs if theatres fail to make these pictures bring the revenue they should?" The answer is that if the exhibitors were to go "wild" with some of the poor big pictures Hollywood has been dishing out lately, they would have to misrepresent the quality of these pictures to the public. And once the public finds out that "it isn't so," they will not believe them when they show a good big picture.

In another part of the statement, Sears said: "If exhibitors would devote as much time to merchandising these great shows to customers as they do in putting over audience games which drive away business the entire industry would be better off."

As you see, Gradwell Sears says to you that giveaway nights do not increase your business, even though you exert great efforts in trying to put them over, and that if you were to exert as much effort in merchandising pictures, you would be taking in more money.

Gentlemen, the person who makes such a statement is general manager of one of the major companies!

If Sears should have addressed his admonition to the producers, calling their attention to the "terrible" quality of the pictures that have been coming out of Hollywood lately, particularly of the pictures of the so-called road-show caliber, he would have rendered the motion picture industry the greatest service imaginable. There is very little difference in cost between a poor big picture and a good big picture; but what a difference at the box office! And all it would require is just a little more intelligence in the selection of the story material and in its treatment. Will he advise those who spend the exhibitor's money to give a little more attention to these?

### BLUNDERS IN STORY TREATMENT

In last week's issue, a fundamental defect in treatment and characterization of "In Old Chicago" was dealt with.

"In Old Chicago" is not the only big picture developed faultily of late; there is a grievous error also in "Wells Fargo." In the closing scenes, the scenarist evidently found himself up a blind alley and did not know how to bring together hero and heroine, who had been estranged and had become separated for approximately seventeen years. The cause of the estrangement, and of the immediate separation, was the result of a note written by the heroine, referring to the route the hero was to take in transporting \$2,000,000 of gold to Washington from San Francisco, by Wells & Fargo Express, on orders of President Lincoln, which note she intended to send to the Confederates. After writing the note, and before signing it, she changed her mind about sending it and threw it into the fire. But the note fell outside and, after the heroine had left the room, her mother, who had never tolerated the hero, because he, a commoner, had married her daughter, a Southern aristocrat, picked up the paper and sent it to the Confederates. The express was accosted by the raiding Confederate party and, in the fight that ensued, the Confederates were routed, and their commanding officer was killed.

The hero searched the dead officer, and when he found the note in his wallet and recognized his wife's handwriting, he thought that she had betrayed him, with the result that he kept away from her for almost seventeen years.

After those years the hero, who happened to be in St. Louis to receive honors from the company, at the plea of his daughter, visits her and her mother. The mother is naturally glad to see her husband and leads him to the garden, where they

(Continued on last page)



### **"Swing Your Lady" with Humphrey Bogart, Nat Pendleton and Louise Fazenda**

(Warner Bros., Jan. 29; time, 77 min.)

A fair comedy with music. Its appeal will be directed mostly to those who like "low" comedy for the characters it depicts, and their actions, are far from elevating. It may however, go over with the masses, for the theme is novel, and on occasion the action is extremely comical. In spite of the fact that some spots are pretty draggy, it holds one's attention fairly well. Most of the picture is a buildup to the wrestling match in the closing scenes; this match has some good comical twists, and should prove exciting to fight fans. The music, which is of the hillbilly type, is peppy and amusing. The picture is more or less of a burlesque on wrestling and on hillbilly folk.

In the development of the plot, Humphrey Bogart, wrestling promoter, his protegee (Nat Pendleton), his trainer (Frank McHugh), and his assistant (Allen Jenkins), arrive in a small Missouri town, hoping to make some money by matching Pendleton with one of the strong mountain men. It develops that the only competition that could be found was in the person of Louise Fazenda, a lady blacksmith, whose worthless husband had left her a long time ago to care for herself and their three children. Thrilled at the chance of making one hundred dollars with which to buy bedroom furniture, Miss Fazenda readily accepts the invitation to wrestle Pendleton. But the plans are disrupted because Pendleton falls in love with Miss Fazenda, and refuses to wrestle with her. Things brighten up again, however, when Miss Fazenda's big strong hillbilly suitor (Daniel Boone Savage), having heard about Pendleton, is ready to tear him to pieces. Bogart gives him his chance to do so in a wrestling match, the winner of the match to marry Miss Fazenda. Bogart tries to prevent Pendleton from winning, and even goes so far as to tell Miss Fazenda that Pendleton was already married. But Pendleton wins, gets Miss Fazenda, and settles down as her husband and village blacksmith. Bogart leaves for New York, with Savage as his new protegee.

The plot was adapted from the play by Kenyon Nicholson and Charles Robinson; Joseph Schrank and Maurice Leo wrote the screen play, Ray Enright directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are Penny Singleton, Weaver Brothers and Elviry, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Mannequin" with Joan Crawford and Spencer Tracy**

(MGM, Jan. 28; time, 94 min.)

Good mass entertainment. It is a romantic triangle drama, with a strong appeal to women. Joan Crawford appears to better advantage here than in her last few pictures; she acts with conviction, winning the spectator's sympathy from the very beginning and holding it throughout. The fact that she divorces her husband to marry another man is worked out logically and in such a way as to keep the audience in sympathy with her. Spencer Tracy, by virtue of an excellent performance, adds to the story's appeal:—

Miss Crawford, a factory worker, hates the squalid surroundings where she lived, and resents the fact that her lazy father and brother would not go to work. Unable to stand conditions any longer, she pleads with her sweet-heart (Alan Curtis), a fight promoter, to marry her; he agrees. While in a Chinese restaurant with his manager (Ralph Morgan), Tracy, a self-made man who had risen from the slums to a position of wealth as owner of a fleet of ships, notices the bridal party and sends over a bottle of champagne. He meets the bride and is struck with her beauty and honesty. Miss Crawford starts out her married life with high hopes; she leaves the factory for a job in the chorus, and, since things were not so good with Curtis, she is the main support. In the meantime, she again meets Tracy and is annoyed when he tells her that Curtis was worthless, and that he himself loved her. When she loses her position and things look bad, Curtis suggests that she divorce him, marry Tracy, get a good cash settlement and then go back with him (Curtis). Disgusted at the suggestion, she leaves. Tracy meets her again and pleads with her to marry him; she finally succumbs. Together with Tracy and a friend, she goes to Paris where she obtains her divorce and then marries Tracy. During their honeymoon, she falls deeply in love with him and is happy. Upon their return, realizing that Curtis threatened to blackmail her, she decides to leave Tracy, not knowing that labor troubles had tied up his fleet, ruining him financially. At first Tracy thinks that she wanted to leave him because he had been ruined; but she explains the situation and they are reconciled.

Katherine Brush wrote the story, and Lawrence Hazard, the screen play; Frank Borzage directed it, and Joseph L. Mankiewicz produced it. In the cast are Mary Phillips, Oscar O'Shea, Elizabeth Risdon and others.

Though there are no offensive sex situations, it is mainly adult fare. Class A.

### **"The Divorce of Lady X" with Merle Oberon, Binnie Barnes and Laurence Olivier**

(London Films-United Artists., Feb. 18; time, 90 min.)

Only fair. Aside from the lavish background, and the technicolor photography, which registers well in the outdoor scenes but not so good indoors, this comedy of mistaken identity is suitable mostly for sophisticated audiences. Its two defects, as far as the masses are concerned, are, first, a weak story, which occasionally verges on the risqué without being too subtle about it; and, secondly, the fact that the atmosphere and accents are decidedly British. There is an overabundance of padding in some of the situations. This is so particularly in the beginning, where one scene is dragged out for an entire reel. It is doubtful if the names of Merle Oberon and Binnie Barnes are a strong enough lure for the American picture goers. The background is London:—

Because of an extremely thick fog, Miss Oberon, guest at a fancy dress ball at a fashionable hotel, is unable to go home. The management regretfully informs the guests that, since there were no rooms available, they would have to sleep on chairs. Miss Oberon sneaks into the suite of rooms that was occupied by Laurence Olivier, a barrister, who had refused the management's plea to give up his suite. After much arguing she finally wins him over—she takes the bedroom and he sleeps on the floor in the sitting room. In the morning she leaves without giving him her name. But she had fallen in love with him and had decided to marry him. Olivier receives a visit from a titled gentleman (Ralph Richardson), who wanted him to handle a divorce action against his wife (Binnie Barnes), because she, on the night of the fancy dress ball, had spent the night at a hotel with a strange man. From the way the aggrieved husband explains the case, Olivier gets the idea that Miss Oberon was the wife, and that he was the man in the case. When he again meets Miss Oberon, he tells her that he had received a visit from her husband. Amused, she lets him continue thinking that she was the woman involved. With the help of Miss Barnes and Richardson, she eventually sets him straight; but he is enraged for having been made a fool of. Miss Oberon pacifies him and makes him propose.

The plot was adapted from a story by Lajos Biro. He and Robert E. Sherwood wrote the screenplay, Tim Whelan directed it, and Alexander Korda produced it. Morton Seltén and others are in the cast.

Unsuitable for children and adolescents. Class B.

### **"Love on a Budget" with Jed Prouty**

(20th Century-Fox, Feb. 25; time, 64 min.)

"The Jones Family" provide plentiful comedy in this latest picture of their family affairs, which is as good as the other pictures of this series. Most of the action revolves around the marital troubles of the newly married couple (Shirley Deane and Russell Gleason), who, because of a shortage of funds, find many things to quarrel about. Young folk will appreciate their troubles and feel sympathy for them. There are many amusing situations. The most comical situation is that in which Miss Deane invites her family to her first dinner party and is humiliated because everything turns out badly—the potatoes are burned, the ducks shrink because they had been overcooked, and the dessert is terrible. To complicate matters, Alan Dinehart, Miss Deane's uncle, arrives and almost wrecks the marriage by inducing Gleason to invest his hard-earned money, that he had been saving up for furniture, in a wild idea. Once the investment is made, the audience is held in tense suspense, for fear lest Gleason lose everything. The fact that in the end it all turns out right, insuring the future happiness of Miss Deane and Gleason, is a surprise to Gleason, who had expected the worse, for he knew Dinehart was not to be trusted. The familiar family touches are all here, with the younger daughter asserting her rights as a grown-up and being squelched, as usual.

Robert Ellis and Helen Logan wrote the screen play, Herbert Leeds directed it, and Max Golden produced it. In the cast are Spring Byington, Florence Roberts, Kenneth Howell, George Ernest, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"My Old Kentucky Home" with Evelyn Venable, Grant Richards, Clara Blandick, Bernardine Hayes and J. Farrell MacDonald**

(*Monogram, February 9; running time, 72 min.*)

A fine dramatic entertainment. There is deep human interest in many of the situations, awakened by the determination of the hero not to marry the girl he loved, because he was going blind and did not want her to have a blind man on her hands. What makes the hero's character more lovable is the fact that he made every effort to keep the heroine ignorant of the fact that he was going blind. The character of Granny Blair is most lovable; and it is impersonated with art by Miss Clara Blandick—she makes the part live. The character of Gail, impersonated by Bernardine Hayes, is not bad either; she is the cause of the hero's misfortune, but does everything in her power to atone. There is considerable comedy, provoked by Miss Blandick, who tears about with her cane like a cyclone, putting everybody in his place, but commanding love and respect while doing so. Another part that provokes much laughter is that of Scipio, impersonated well by Paul White, a colored boy. Stephen Foster's song, "My Old Kentucky Home" and other music by this author is sung effectively by the Hall Johnson Choir. The love interest is strong:—

Larry Blair, the male descendant of a Kentucky aristocratic family, and Lisbeth Calvert, also an aristocratic Kentuckian, announce their engagement. This disturbs Gail, whom Larry had helped to study music in Europe for a career, and who had fallen in love with him, without Larry's knowing anything about it. Gail's brother suggests to Larry to call on her so as to pacify her, and Larry does so. As Larry was about to leave Gail to return to his party, Gail pours poison into a glass and is drinking it when Larry knocks the glass out of her hand before she had a chance to drink it all. Part of the poison is spilt on his eyes. He orders the maid to call an ambulance and the two are taken to a hospital. Gail is saved but Larry's eyesight is affected. Lisbeth is shocked when she hears of the affair, and when the newspapers headline it, making it appear as if Larry were keeping Gail, she leaves New York and goes back home, Blairstown, Kentucky. Granny Blair, head of the Blair family, tries to console her. Realizing that both loved each other yet, she arranges for the celebration of the centennial of the founding of Blairstown by the Blair family, her purpose being to bring the two together. But Larry, having learned that he would eventually go blind, and not wanting to burden Lisbeth with a blind husband, sends for Gail and her brother so as to lead Lisbeth to believe that he was still infatuated with Gail. While in Blairstown, Trent, Gail's brother, becomes infatuated with Lisbeth's young sister and turns her head with tales of Paris, Riviera, Venice and the like. They are about to elope when Larry is informed of it and, lead by the Centennial's publicity girl, intercepts the pair in the Mayor's office. It is then when Gail informs Lisbeth of Larry's true character. Reconciliation is effected between the two. A specialist, sent for by Granny Blair, informs Larry that his sight would be eventually restored.

The story was written and put into screen play form by John T. Neville; it was produced by E. B. Derr, and directed by Lambert Hillyer.

Good for the entire family. Class A.

**"The Buccaneer" with Fredric March, Margot Grahame, Akim Tamiroff and Franciska Gaal**

(*Paramount, Feb. 4; time 123 min.*)

The lavish production given "The Buccaneer," in accordance with the typical DeMille style, cannot hide the fact that it lacks much in the way of entertainment. It is a highly fictionalized account of the doings of the pirate Jean LaFitte, during the 1812 War between the Americans and the British; but it is seldom stirring. For one thing, it has very little emotional appeal; for another, there are several twists in the story that weaken its dramatic structure. For instance, in the supposedly highly dramatic situation in which La Fitte and his pirates help General Jackson hold back the English, there is injected some clowning that makes the situation seem ridiculous—a young girl, dressed in a soldier's uniform, gets in every one's way. An attempt is made to condone the actions of LaFitte and to win the spectator's sympathy for him by showing that he would not permit his men to attack ships flying the American flag; but it is to no avail, for he is a pirate, just the same, sending to death any one who contested his authority. Occasional mob scenes are exciting, and one or two situations hold one's interest fairly well. The best situation is that which shows LaFitte sneaking into General Jackson's

quarters and bargaining with the General for the pardon of his men and himself. Even the love interest is unbelievable. Fredric March, with his hair descending down to his temples, looks unromantic.

The story tells of the efforts of LaFitte to help America in its fight against the English. He makes a proposition to the Governor of Louisiana to supply him with one thousand men (his pirates) and ammunition, in return for full pardon for their misdeeds, and American citizenship for them all. The Governor promises to think the proposition over; this cheers LaFitte, who felt that it would give him a chance to become respectable, thus enabling him to marry the beautiful society girl (Margot Grahame), with whom he was in love. But Senator Crawford (Ian Keith), traitorously working with the British, vetoes the plan, suggesting that they attack LaFitte and his men on their Island. The Americans attack the pirates, killing some, and capturing others; but most of them escape. LaFitte, disgusted at the turn of events, sneaks into General Jackson's quarters to bargain with the General. Jackson is intrigued with the offer of help from LaFitte and orders the pirates released, so that they might help him in the battle. LaFitte and his men are instrumental in holding back the English. La Fitte is at last accepted by society, and feted at a ball. But everything is spoiled by the entrance of his right-hand man (Akim Tamiroff), who had gone to the ball in company with Gretchen (Franciska Gaal), a Dutch girl under La Fitte's protection. LaFitte's fiancée recognizes the dress and brooch worn by Gretchen as the property of her sister, who had sailed on an American merchant vessel on her honeymoon, and from whom she had not heard. LaFitte is compelled to admit that, against his orders, his men had looted and burned the vessel, bringing death to all the passengers but to Gretchen. The guests are aroused and ready to hang LaFitte; but Jackson, remembering his help, gives him one hour head start to get out of the country before they would pursue him. LaFitte, knowing that marriage with his sweetheart would be impossible, sets sail with his men; he is happy to find that Gretchen, who loved him, was aboard the ship.

Lyle Saxon wrote the story, and Edwin Justus Mayer, Harold Lamb and C. Gardner Sullivan, the screen play; Cecil B. DeMille directed and produced it. In the cast are Walter Brennan, Anthony Quinn, Hugh Sothern, and others.

Hardly suitable for children. Class B.

**"Happy Landing" with Sonja Henie, Don Ameche and Cesar Romero**

(*20th Century-Fox, Jan. 28; time, 101 min.*)

Very good. It is Miss Henie's marvelous skating routines that make it exciting. She does not appear often, but when she does, it is something to see. She executes the most difficult feats on the ice with the utmost of ease and grace; as a matter of fact, her skating in this picture is superior to that in her other pictures. The fact that the story is silly and drags in spots will probably be overlooked by the masses for, in addition to Miss Henie's skating, it offers plentiful music, a few peppy numbers of the popular variety, and some good comedy bits. And the romance is pleasant:—

Cesar Romero, conceited band leader, flies across the ocean with his publicity agent (Don Ameche), leaving in New York his enraged sweetheart (Ethel Merman) from whom he was happy to escape. Because of lack of fuel, they are unable to continue to Paris; instead, they land in a small town in Norway. The first person Romero meets is romantic Miss Henie, who had refused to marry the man of her father's choice, preferring to wait for a prince charming. To her, Romero personified all that she had waited for. Romero, following his typical tactics, makes love to her and, at the village festival, dances with her twice, without realizing that this signified a proposal of marriage. Ameche gets him away in time. After fulfilling an engagement in Paris, Romero goes back to New York, and is annoyed when he learns that Miss Henie had followed him there. Ameche tries to persuade her to go home, but she refuses. Having fallen in love with her, he decides to help her by building her up as a skating star. He succeeds; she becomes an overnight sensation. But, being in love with her, he cannot listen to her raving about Romero, and so informs her that he had decided to turn her contract over to another manager. His going away makes her realize that she loved him. And so, after many complications and misunderstandings, Ameche and Miss Henie are united.

Milton Sperling and Boris Ingster wrote the original screen play, Roy Del Ruth directed it, and David Hempstead produced it. In the cast are Jean Hersholt, Billy Gilbert and others.

Class A.



might talk privately. There the hero takes the old note out of his pocket and, handing it to her, asks her to destroy it.

A poorer story development could not have been made. By such a development, that is, by the hero's handing the note to his wife, the author presents the hero as lacking in all the essentials of a gentleman, for it is the same as if he had said to his wife: "Dear! It is not my fault that I kept away from you all these years. It was your fault; you betrayed me to the Confederates. A wife should always be loyal to her husband; and you proved disloyal to me. But I am willing to forgive you."

In real life, a man in the position of the hero of this story should have felt like a "heel" when his wife would have told him that she had not sent the note, punishing her for seventeen years for something she had not done. Besides, such an act on the part of the hero placed the heroine in a position where she had either to stand by her mother, condoning her act, or to think of her as having been a contemptible creature. And the way the action unfolds, it seems as if she chose the latter. You realize, then, how unheroically did the hero act. He made himself small.

A development much more pleasing to the spectator would have been for the heroine's mother, on her death bed, to confess to her daughter the incident about the note and to beg her forgiveness. It is true that the mother might then seem to be out of character, but such a development would have been consistent just the same, for peoples' characters may remain unchanged while in life, but a change in character before death is not contrary to the laws of drama. With such a development, the meeting between the hero and the heroine would have been far more dramatic, far more touching, for the hero would have remained a gentleman, and yet he could have learned from his wife that the cause of their estrangement had been her mother. As for the heroine's failure to communicate with the hero after her mother's death, there could be given many excuses: hurt pride might be one of them.

Even with such a treatment, or better, it is bad judgment to make the story of a \$2,000,000 picture depend on an undestroyed note for the solution.

Some producers may think that criticizing such matters in big pictures is just like splitting hairs; but it is not, for defects of this kind make a difference between a big picture and a great picture—a picture that has a significant effect on the spectator only while he is watching the action unfolding on the screen, to be forgotten afterwards, and a picture that will live long in the memory of those who see it.

### THE WISDOM OF DELAY IN BUYING THE NEW SEASON'S PICTURES

In the last few years some exhibitors have made it a habit of rushing to buy the new season's pictures around May, and some of them even in April or March.

Most of these exhibitors have learned their lesson, I hope, from what has happened to them for having bought their 1937-38 season's pictures early; the depression set in and they found themselves "holding the bag."

There are many reasons why they should not buy their 1938-39 season's pictures early this time, but the most outstanding reason is the fact that the depression is still persisting, and no one knows what kind of deals the producers will make with the foreign markets: in England there is under consideration a new Quota law, the provisions of which may be much more burdensome to American distributors in Great Britain than the old law. This law may require the distribution of one British picture for every American picture that is distributed there. There are many Britishers who demand such a ratio.

Even if the requirements of the law were not to be made so exacting—even if the distribution of one British picture were to be required for every three American pictures distributed there, the American distributors will be placed in a very difficult position, and may be compelled to produce a large number of pictures in Great Britain to comply with the provisions of such a law. If that were to happen, many of these pictures, or all of them, may be imported to the United States and made part of the releasing schedule. You realize, then, how wise it is for you and for every other exhibitor to delay buying the new season's product until what will happen is definitely known.

Early buying is dangerous under all conditions, particularly when the contract terms are so burdensome. The least an exhibitor can do then is to wait until he learns whether the company whose product he wishes to buy shows some signs that the pictures it will produce will have considerable merit.

### GIVE BEST PICTURES LONGER RUN TO PREVENT SHORTAGE IN SUMMER

Unless the situation changes completely, HARRISON'S REPORTS fears that there is going to be a serious shortage of pictures this summer, not only of good pictures but of pictures in general. There will not be sufficient funds in the treasuries of some of the companies to enable them to complete their schedules.

There was danger of a fund shortage even before the depression had set in; you may imagine, then, what the situation is now, when the producers are receiving less money from rentals, because of the drop in attendance.

HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that you give the good pictures a longer run, so that you may have accumulated some of the lesser grade pictures to use if you should have a shortage of pictures in the tail end of the season.

### ALLIED MINNEAPOLIS SILVER JUBILEE WILL PROVE OUTSTANDING

Al Steffes is going to put on a great show in Minneapolis on the evening of February 2, the last night of the Jubilee; he has engaged the Varzos orchestra, of radio fame, to play during the banquet.

At the banquet there will be many officials of three states, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota—governors, assemblymen, senators, judges and others, and perhaps some congressmen.

You will miss a great affair if you should fail to come.



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## PARAMOUNT'S MOVE AGAINST NORTH DAKOTA'S THEATRE DIVORCE LAW

North Dakota is, as you all no doubt know by this time, the first state in the Union to have passed an act making it unlawful for anyone connected with the production or the distribution of moving pictures to have an interest, directly or indirectly, in a moving picture theatre. This law is to take effect March 15, this year.

Shortly after the law was passed last year, Paramount, which is the only producing-distributing company to have large theatre holdings in that State, instituted suit to test the constitutionality of the law.

In the last few weeks, investigations have been conducted and depositions taken preparatory to the trial of that action, which is to take place early this spring before a court consisting of three Federal judges.

Paramount has now made an application for a temporary injunction to restrain the State of North Dakota from enforcing this law until the question of its constitutionality has been determined.

The exhibitor leaders who sponsored this law, and who are assisting the State of North Dakota in the defense of it, expected such a move on the part of Paramount, for the law requires all producer-distributors interested in exhibition, directly or indirectly, to dispose of such interests within one year from the day the law had been approved by the Governor of that State, and Paramount naturally did not want to take such a step merely on the command of the Legislature of that State; it was to be expected that it would seek to have the highest court in the land pass upon the right of the Legislature of that State to enact such a law.

Since the outcome of judicial tests of laws passed by State Legislatures, and even by the United States Congress, has in recent years been uncertain, the Court may, without undertaking to pass upon the probable outcome of the action to test the constitutionality of the law, grant the injunction. The court may feel that, by permitting Paramount to retain its theatre holdings during the time that will be required to complete the action, no one will be harmed, whereas, if it should deny the injunction, Paramount will suffer irreparable damage in case the U. S. Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional. If the court should take such an attitude, as it probably will, it is fairly certain that it will grant the injunction.

If the Court should issue such an injunction, you should not become alarmed, for this would not be an indication that your cause has been lost, or even

weakened. Nor would Paramount gain a victory thereby, even though it might try to make it so appear; it would gain merely a technical victory, of little real significance.

The exhibitor leaders feel sure that they can induce the legislatures of other states to pass a similar law, but they are not taking any steps with that end in view, by reason of the fact that, until the present case is finally adjudicated in favor of the State of North Dakota, that is, of the exhibitors, it would be futile for them to take similar steps in other states. They are merely biding their time until the U. S. Supreme Court has handed down a decision.

## CECIL DE MILLE'S BLUNDER

In the issue of January 15, there was discussed in these pages Cecil B. DeMille's New Orleans' statement, by which he suggested that the exhibitors should pay more money to the producers, because today pictures cost more.

In that discussion, I stated that the producer could get more money from the exhibitors without exacting from them a higher percentage of the intake, simply by making better pictures.

After looking at DeMille's "Buccaneer," I can conscientiously say that a more sensible piece of advice could not have been given to the producers in general, and to Mr. DeMille in particular, for the "Buccaneer" is not the sort of picture that would entitle Mr. DeMille to demand a greater share of the exhibitor's intake.

There are no individual blunders in any of the situations or of the characterizations; it is the whole story that is a blunder. How could Mr. DeMille hope to interest the picturegoers in the doings of a leader of a band of cutthroats, a person who sent to death any one who contested his authority?

The making of the "Buccaneer" is a blunder also from another viewpoint; it offends the sensibilities of the British people, for it shows a band of hooligans defeating the British Army. Does Mr. DeMille think that the picture-going public in Great Britain and the British Dominions will accept this picture without resentment?

I have heard it said that Mr. DeMille's pictures go well abroad; and since eighty per cent of the "abroad" market consists of Great Britain and the British Dominions, it is natural for one to assume that Mr. DeMille exercises great caution in the choice of his story material. But such does not seem to be the case in this instance. For him, then, to have spent nearly two million dollars on a picture that could not help offending the greatest part

(Continued on last page)



**"Look Out for Love" with Anna Neagle,  
Tullio Carminati and Robert Douglas**  
(Gaumont British, January 15; time, 68 min.)

A pretty good picture, produced lavishly. Most of the lavishness is in the cabaret scenes, where Anna Neagle is shown as having reached great fame as a dancer. This part rivals in lavishness similar parts in expensive American pictures. There is some human interest, too, most of it being awakened by Tullio Carminati, whose funds enable the heroine to make a career as a dancer. The characterization of Robert Douglas is somewhat faulty; in the beginning he is not shown in his true character, and later on the spectator finds out that he, Douglas, did not deserve his sympathy. The love affair between the hero and the heroine is fairly interesting:—

The attention of Andreani (Tullio Carminati—hero), a cultured diplomat, is attracted by Jacqueline (Anna Neagle—heroine), a poor orphaned girl, while she was dancing to the tune of a barrel organ outside a fashionable West End club. When later the police arrest her for violating police regulations, Father Donnelly, the priest who was her guardian, calls on Andreani and pleads with him to use his influence to have the charges dropped. Andreani does so. Jacqueline, who had been living with a poor family, decides to obtain a position as a maid and, unable to furnish references, has Father Donnelly obtain them from Andreani. More and more Andreani takes an interest in her. And so does young Nigel Taplow (Robert Douglas), a colleague of his in the diplomatic service. Andreani furnishes Father Donnelly with funds with which to further Jacqueline's career as a dancer, without her knowledge. Taplow and Jacqueline meet often secretly. Eventually they become engaged. Andreani becomes aware of their meetings and warns Taplow, cautioning him that Jacqueline was different. Andreani, to save Jacqueline from falling in love with a man of Taplow's type, a libertine, has him sent to China on a secret business mission. Taplow pleads with her to wait for him, promising to marry her after his return. In China, Taplow forgets his promises and makes similar promises to another girl. When he gives out the secrets of his mission, he is recalled. He is to be disgraced when Jacqueline calls on Andreani and accuses him of having purposely sent Taplow to China to be disgraced. Andreani, being in love with her, assumes the blame for Taplow's violation of trust and resigns from his post. When Jacqueline reads in the papers about his resignation and disgrace, she calls on him, and when he refuses to see her she forces her way in. But he, thinking that she still loved Taplow, refuses to give her any encouragement. Reading on the tags of his luggage the place of his destination, she follows him and, after she had assured him that the incident of his resignation had made her realize that she loved him and not Taplow, they become reconciled.

Ray Lewis wrote the story; it was produced and directed by Herbert Wilcox, from a scenario by Florence Tranter and Monckton Hoffs.

Nothing offensive is shown, even though both the hero and his friend are supposed to be libertines. Suitability, Class A.

**"Saleslady" with Anne Nagel  
and Weldon Heyburn**  
(Monogram, February 2; time, 64 min.)

A modest program offering. The routine marital plot is developed without any new angles; its familiarity weakens one's interest in the outcome. One's attention is held only because of the sympathy one feels for both the hero (Weldon Heyburn) and the heroine (Anne Nagel), in their struggle to make the best of conditions and lead a happy married life. One respects Miss Nagel particularly because she had left a wealthy home, to make a place for herself in the world without the help of her grandfather's millions. Heyburn, too, shows likeable traits by refusing to accept the "soft" job offered him by the heroine's grandfather (Harry Davenport), desiring instead to fend for himself and to work for the money that he earned. Of course, it all turns out just as the spectator expected it would—Heyburn makes good in a big way in a business similar to that of Davenport's. As a matter of fact, he is so successful, that Davenport is compelled to take him in as a partner in order to save his own business. Miss Nagel is happy at the outcome.

Kubec Glasman wrote the story, and Marion Orth, the screen play; Arthur G. Collins directed it, and Ken Goldsmith produced it. In the cast are Doris Rankin, Harry Hayden, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Paradise for Three" with Robert Young,  
Florence Rice and Frank Morgan**  
(MGM, January 28; time, 78 min.)

A delightful comedy; it keeps one chuckling from beginning to the end. The story of mistaken identity is not unusual; but because of competent performances and good production values it holds one's attention throughout. The romance is charming, and the background of the Swiss Alps country, pleasant to the eye. There are several situations that provoke hearty laughter. A comical scene is that in which Frank Morgan, who had been compelled to wash dishes because he could not pay a hotel bill, places the dishes in an electric washing machine, and, forgetting to cover the machine, sets the motor going; in a minute, all the dishes come flying out and are smashed. It is the type of entertainment that puts one in a good mood, and should satisfy most audiences:—

Morgan, millionaire owner of a soap factory, is overjoyed when he learns that he had, under an assumed name, won one of the prizes in a slogan contest sponsored by his own firm. He decides to take advantage of the reward, a trip to the Alps, for he had always wanted to go away to enjoy himself without any one's knowing that he was a millionaire. The other contest winner, (Robert Young), unemployed, looks forward to the trip as a chance to meet influential people. Morgan's ever-watchful housekeeper (Edna May Oliver), having found out about the trip, telephones the hotel manager, informing him that the contest winner was a millionaire and orders him to treat him accordingly. When the two contestants arrive, the manager, assuming that Young was the millionaire, gives him a suite of rooms; and as for Morgan, he puts him in an attic room, with a board for a mattress, broken windows, and no heat; but Morgan enjoys it. Mary Astor, a scheming divorcee, having accidentally found out who Morgan really was, flatters him with her attentions. Morgan is annoyed when his daughter (Florence Rice) and Miss Oliver follow him to the hotel. Miss Rice and Young fall in love; but she does not tell him who she is. Morgan finds out about Miss Astor's trickery, and, having learned his lesson, decides to go home. Having found out from his attorney that he owned the hotel in the Alps, he demotes the manager and makes his dishwasher-friend the new manager. And he engages Young as his advertising manager. At first, he and Miss Rice have some trouble with Young, who resented having been fooled, but eventually everything is adjusted.

Erich Kaestner wrote the story, and George Oppenheimer and Harry Ruskin, the screen play; Edward Buzzell directed it, and Sam Zimbalist produced it. In the cast are Reginald Owen, Henry Hull, Herman Bing, and Sig Rumann.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Double Danger" with Preston Foster  
and Whitney Bourne**  
(RKO, January 28; time, 61 min.)

A mild crook melodrama, of program grade; it lacks the excitement and suspense one expects in pictures of this type. The story is far-fetched, and the comedy, particularly that which is provoked by a young girl's adolescent approach to love, is annoying. There is no human appeal; and, since the hero and the heroine are both crooks, one feels no sympathy for them. The fact that they reform in the end is not of much help:—

Samuel S. Hinds, Chief of Police, sets a trap to catch the crook known as "The Gentleman." Although he suspected Preston Foster, a novelist, who had written stories about "The Gentleman," and who was his friend, he did not have evidence with which to convict him. So he invites to his home Foster, as well as Whitney Bourne, another crook whom he suspected, and sets the trap for them both, at the same time hoping to recover valuable diamonds which Miss Bourne had stolen, and which had in turn been stolen from her by Foster. He sets as bait imitation diamonds and lets the information drop that the diamonds Foster had in his possession were paste. Foster does not fall for the trap, but Miss Bourne does. Having fallen in love with Miss Bourne, Foster risks his freedom to destroy evidence Hinds had against her. He then returns the jewels. Hinds, knowing that his two suspects had fallen in love with each other, hints that he would not prosecute them if they would leave the country; and so they take his advice.

Arthur T. Horman wrote the story, and he and J. Robert Bren, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Maury Cohen produced it. In the cast are Donald Meek, Paul Guilfoyle, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



### "The Rat" with Ruth Chatterton, Anton Walbrook and Rene Ray

(RKO, January 21; time, 69 min.)

This British-made melodrama is mediocre entertainment, as far as intelligent audiences are concerned; but it may find favor with those who go in for lurid melodramas. Both the story and background, which hark back to the old days of Paris underworld dramas, are sordid. And, with the exception of the heroine (Rene Ray), there is not a character for whom one feels sympathy. A few situations are distasteful. One such situation is where the heroine, an innocent young girl, is approached by a lecherous millionaire, who attempts to make her surrender to him. Even the big dramatic moment at the end, where Ruth Chatterton, a wealthy woman of the world, who had become infatuated with the hero, sacrifices her reputation to save him from the guillotine, fails to make much impression, by reason of the unpleasant nature of her testimony. Nor is the romance developed in an appealing way:—

Walbrook, known in the Parisian underworld as "The Rat," because of a promise, finds himself the guardian of Rene Ray, a young innocent girl, whose father, a criminal, had been sent to the guillotine. She lives at Walbrook's apartment, and cooks, sews, and scrubs for him uncomplainingly; but he treats her mostly in a harsh manner. Miss Chatterton accompanies Hugh Miller, a millionaire, whose mistress she was, for a thrill to an underworld dive. There she notices Walbrook and finds him attractive. Learning where she lived, Walbrook goes to her apartment to steal her pearls; but she catches him and induces him to desist. He becomes infatuated with her, to Miss Ray's sorrow, for she loved him desperately. Miss Chatterton's erstwhile millionaire lover calls on Miss Ray, and when he attempts to seduce her she kills him. Walbrook, realizing that he really loved Miss Ray, tries to shoulder the blame for the murder. But Miss Chatterton, a spectator in the court during the trial, knowing that the jury would be more lenient with Miss Ray than with Walbrook, asks to be heard. She testifies that Walbrook had spent the night with her and, therefore, could not have committed the murder. Because of this testimony, Walbrook is acquitted, but Miss Ray is sentenced to a year in prison. She is not unhappy, however, for she knew that Walbrook loved her and would wait for her.

The plot was adapted from the play by Ivor Novello and Constance Collier. Jack Raymond directed it, and Herbert Wilcox produced it. In the cast is Beatrix Lehmann.

Unsuitable for children or adolescents. Class B.

### "Penrod and His Twin Brother" with Billy and Bobby Mauch and Frank Craven

(Warner Bros., February 26; time, 62 min.)

Good entertainment for the juvenile trade, suitable mostly for showing on Saturdays. It hasn't as much human appeal as "Penrod and Sam," which started this series, for less stress is laid on the relationship between father and son, and more on the doings of the boys' gang. It should, however, prove exciting for juveniles, for the boys become involved with a gang of bank robbers, and become responsible for their capture; they are aided considerably by a dog and a carrier pigeon. Many laughs are provoked by Philip Hurlie, a young colored boy, who endears himself to the audience by his natural manner and good deeds. The closing scenes are fairly exciting:—

Billy Mauch (Penrod) is enraged when the police insist that his dog had been biting different persons and would have to be taken from him for examination, for he knew that his dog never bit any one. Things are cleared up when it is discovered that a new arrival in town (Bobby Mauch) was the image of Billy and that it was his dog that had been doing the biting. The gang decide to take Bobby into their organization of "Junior G-Men." Jackie Morrow, the banker's son, the most disliked boy in the gang, feels honored when the boys order him to go to a designated spot to send the carrier pigeon back to them with a message. Jackie accidentally becomes entangled with bank robbers, who abduct him and take him to their hideout. He sends the pigeon out with a message. Being unable to convince the police that the message meant something, the boys set out to investigate for themselves. They find Rodney, and send for help. In the meantime, they trap the robbers and turn them over to the police, when they arrive. The boys, as well as Billy's dog, are honored for their good work.

The story is by Booth Tarkington; William Jacobs and Hugh Cummings wrote the screen play. William McGann directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Spring Byington, Charles Halton and Claudia Coleman.

Suitability, Class A.

### "The Kid Comes Back" with Wayne Morris, June Travis and Barton MacLane

(Warner Bros., February 19; time, 61 min.)

A fairly good program picture, revolving around prize-fighting. Because of Wayne Morris' popularity, and the appealing title, it probably stands a better-than-average chance at the box-office. As entertainment, however, its appeal will be directed more to men than to women, for the action is concentrated on the fighting game. Although not much footage is wasted on the romance, it is important to the plot, for it has an effect on the hero's career. A humorous note is injected into the story by the pleasant friendship that develops between the hero and a precocious youngster:

Wayne Morris, a Texas cowboy stranded in New York, is befriended by Barton MacLane, contender for the heavyweight championship title, who sees in Morris material for a good fighter. Under MacLane's tutelage, Morris develops into a good boxer, with many victories to his credit. MacLane is disappointed when the heavyweight champion retires without first accepting his challenge. The Boxing Commission names MacLane as the natural contender for the title, informing him that, through the process of elimination bouts, they would pick his opponent. MacLane feels that Morris would be the best man to meet him. But since Morris and MacLane's sister (June Travis) had fallen in love with each other, Morris had promised Miss Travis that he would not fight her brother. MacLane, by heaping insults at Morris, finally angers him to the point where he accepts the challenge. Miss Travis, annoyed, breaks with Morris. MacLane beats Morris, winning the championship title he had long cherished. Reconciliation between the friends follow; Miss Travis forgives Morris.

E. J. Flanagan wrote the story, and George Bricker, the screen play; B. Reeves Eason directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are James Robbins, Joseph Crehan, Dickie Jones, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Everybody Sing" with Allan Jones, Judy Garland and Fanny Brice

(MGM, February 4; time, 90 min.)

A tuneful, merry comedy; it should prove entertaining to most audiences. It has no huge sets for a background; nevertheless it has more to offer in the way of entertainment than "Rosalie," for it has fast action, spirited performances, and amusing clowning. The story, which is a variation on the "daffy" family theme, is nothing to get excited about; but it serves well as a means of putting over the comedy and the music. Judy Garland and Allan Jones sing the different popular songs so effectively that one wants to hear more. And as for comedy, Fanny Brice, the well-known stage comedian, brings to the screen her individual type of clowning; where she is known, she should go over big; and where she is not known, there is no doubt that she will make a good impression and please.

The plot revolves around the eccentric family life of Reginald Owen, a playwright, his actress wife (Billie Burke), and their two children (Lynne Carver and Judy Garland). Owen objects to Miss Burke's insistence on having Reginald Gardiner as her leading man in a new play, and every one in the household, including the maid (Fanny Brice) and the cook (Allan Jones), are affected by the quarreling and act in a slightly insane manner. Judy, who had been expelled from school, decides that, since her father was financially embarrassed, she would help him out by singing at a cafe. This shocks her parents, who insist on sending her off on a European tour with a guardian. But she escapes from the boat, and rushes to Jones, who had been discharged from her home, and who was devoting his time to putting on a musical show. Since he was in love with Judy's sister and wanted to help the family, he decides to put Judy in the show. When Miss Burke receives a cablegram informing her that Judy was not in Europe, she refuses to go on with her own play because of overwrought nerves. The police finally locate Judy at the theatre and, together with the parents, they rush there. Judy's overwhelming success makes her parents change their minds about her appearing in public. And so they are reconciled—Judy remains in the show. Jones marries Miss Carver, and the quarrelling is stopped. Even Miss Brice, who, too, was appearing in the show, is happy, for she had found her long lost lover from Russia.

Florence Ryerson and Edgar Allan Woolf wrote the story and screen play. Edwin L. Marin directed it, and Harry Rapf produced it. In the cast are Helen Troy, Monty Woolley and Henry Armetta.

Class A.



of his foreign market, which brings him approximately fifty per cent of his pictures' total intake, is an injustice, not only to the exhibitors, at home as well as abroad, but to the Paramount organization itself, which is entitled to receive some profit from its hard work in selling his pictures.

In order for Paramount to obtain enough returns to be enabled to recoup the cost of production and pay the cost of distribution, even if it were to discount any profits, Neil Agnew must devote the energies of his entire organization to exploiting this picture almost exclusively, taking money away from the appropriation of other pictures, which could perhaps have brought better results in proportion; and the exhibitors must try to make the public believe that it is a great picture, with the result that the picture-goers, if many of them should find its entertainment values highly exaggerated, will lose faith in the exhibitor, to the detriment of the entire industry.

But this is not altogether the fault of Mr. DeMille; the blame must be placed chiefly on the shoulders of the bankers who, without knowing the first principles of picture production, have undertaken to take over film companies. They know nothing about story material; consequently they are in no position to pass upon the suitability of stories presented to them by a director for approval. They approve budgets amounting to millions of dollars, without knowing the first principles of the business. Any wonder then that they are compelled to dig into their pockets for more funds to enable the studios to finish their schedules?

Harrison's Reports suggests to Mr. Agnew not to exert his organization's greatest efforts on this picture; he should retain the faith the public still has in the Paramount trade mark to use it for future pictures that may be entitled to such efforts.

### PHILADELPHIA EXHIBITORS PROTEST TO EDDIE CANTOR

The following telegram was sent to Eddie Cantor by Lewen Pizor, president of the Philadelphia zone exhibitor organization:

"Your advertised personal appearance for artists in Philadelphia starting March sixteenth as one of nine announced programs makes your appearance at an average admission of 28c. This non-theatrical organization is in direct competition with theatres charging admissions of 30c to 75c who show your pictures at rentals demanded by Twentieth Century of 30 to 40%. This is manifestly unfair and harmful to the industry by tending to undermine the already weakened theatrical structure. Such fund raising methods give no permanency to screen and actor. It is surprising that you as an outstanding artist would appear on a coupon ticket with the admission averaging 28c. If admission prices have to be reduced to meet competition of this kind then production values, salaries and everything else will crumble. This organization resents personal appearances of you or any other star at such ridiculously low admission prices and further this organization protests against non-theatricals using headline names and screen personalities like yours in direct competition with legitimate motion picture theatres for the sole purpose of fostering and promoting the raising of funds for themselves."

### RUNNING A THEATRE ON A SYSTEM

Under the heading, "Percentage Operation of Theatres," *The Indiana Exhibitor*, house organ of Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, contains the following editorial:

"Any business man who is worthy of the name must be able to analyze his business periodically to keep the various phases of his operation in balance. Our business is no different from any other and the wise exhibitor KNOWS what he is doing and why he is doing it, instead of just guessing as he goes along.

"With the thought in mind that some of us may be assisted with a 'cost set-up' on the various parts of our theatre operation, we are publishing the following schedule which has been found over a period of years to follow approximately the successful operation of a motion picture theatre.

Advertising .....	6%
Film Rental Including Shorts .....	25%
Management and Booking .....	5%
Salaries and Wages .....	20%
Rent .....	12 to 15%
Heat, Light and Power .....	4%
Taxes .....	3%
Insurance .....	2%
Other Expenses .....	10%
Profit .....	10%

"If your costs are deviating materially from any of the above percentages, we urge that you immediately take steps to bring them into line. Make sure that when your fiscal year ends something hasn't slipped by your attention and cut deeply into your profits."

### LET'S HOPE THAT CAGNEY HAS LEARNED HIS LESSON

James Cagney has gone back to Warner Bros.

There is no doubt in my mind that every exhibitor feels glad to see him back in the old fold, for during the period of his recalcitrance hundreds of thousands of dollars were lost by producer, distributor, exhibitor, as well as himself. And this loss cannot be recovered.

Harrison's Reports does not wish to criticize an artist for refusing to submit to the arbitrariness of the studio that employs him, but there are times when the dispute is of no significance and could be settled with the display of a little good will. The dispute between Cagney and Warner Bros. was not so serious that it could not have been settled by arbitration. Hot-headedness, however, on both sides, prevented its settlement.

Many an actor has lost his popularity by an insignificant controversy, when he left the studio that employed him. In most cases the actor's popularity had been kept alive by good organization—a unit producer who knew the sort of stories that fitted him, who would choose the sort of directors that could get the best there was in him. In his new environment, the actor had lost the old crew, and before the new crew could get to know his capabilities as well as his failings, it was too late—his popularity went to pieces.

Some of the times a player lost his popularity because he remained off the screen too long.

Harrison's Reports hopes that Mr. Cagney's popularity has not diminished because of his long absence from the screen.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING****Vol. XX****SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1938****No. 7****THE CASE OF "SNOW WHITE"**

Some exhibitors have written to this office complaining against the supposed demand on the part of the RKO sales representatives that children be admitted to the performances of "Snow White" at a 25c minimum admission price. They feel that it is unfair to change the theatre's standard prices for children, and may arouse the parents' resentment.

I communicated with the RKO Home Office and have been assured that no minimum price has been set for children, in any territory. Suggestions have been made as follows: When the seating capacity of an exhibitor's theatre is small, the exhibitor might arrange for a special matinee for children at the regular admission prices, for unless such a step is taken the exhibitor will not receive much money, by reason of the fact that many children will stay to see the show twice. Such has been the experience in New York.

But the representatives of RKO make this merely as a suggestion; the final decision must rest at all times with the exhibitor. He may have some other way of solving the problem. But it is up to him to decide what to do.

If any RKO representative has insisted that you charge 25c minimum for children, this paper is in a position to say that he has either misread his instructions or exceeded his authority. In such cases, this paper will gladly undertake to make the proper representations to the home office.

Another complaint has been to the effect that an exhibitor cannot buy "Snow White" unless he buys the entire RKO program. This complaint is entirely unjustified, for any exhibitor can buy this picture alone.

It is understood, of course, that, in localities where RKO has a regular contract-holder, this exhibitor receives preference in negotiating for the picture—and no one should condemn RKO for standing by its old customers; but where there is no RKO account, any exhibitor can buy the picture, provided he meets the sales terms.

As to the complaint that 50% of the gross receipts is demanded for the picture, this is a matter that must be determined by each exhibitor himself. All this paper can say is that, in deciding the matter, the exhibitor must take into consideration the attitude of the public.

**"DISH" PICTURES**

Under the heading, "Warners, Giveaways and Pictures," *Contact*, the house organ of the Philadelphia zone exhibitor organization, contained the following editorial:

"Grad Sears is all het up because the boys give away dishes and things with his 57-minute features.

"Hollywood . . . can't sell the fine (?) product it makes," says the Warner sales chief, "That's up to the exhibitor. If exhibitors would devote as much time to merchandising shows to their customers as they do in putting over audience games which drive away biz, the entire industry would be better off."

"We know you've got a sales drive on, Grad, and we don't blame you for making a speech to keep the Grad Sears Drive on the front page: but why pick THAT one out of camphor?"

"Exhibitors are not imbued with a year-round Christmas spirit in giving away dishes and cash to their customers. They've been driven to it by the deliberate policy of the producers turning out quickies to maintain their releasing schedule. And one of the worst offenders in this respect has been Warners.

"Let's look at the record. Among the Warner-First National releases so far this year are:

'Adventurous Blonde,' Glenda Farrell and Barton MacLane, 61 min.

'Love Is on the Air,' Ronald Reagan and June Travis, 61 min.

'Missing Witnesses,' Dick Purcell and Jean Dale, 61 min.

'Expensive Husbands,' Beverly Roberts, 62 min.

'Over the Goal,' Wm. Hopper and June Travis, 63 min.

'She Loved a Fireman,' Dick Foran and Ann Sheridan, 57 min.

'Sh! The Octopus,' Hugh Herbert, 54 min.

'Invisible Menace,' Boris Karloff, 55 min.

'Sergeant Murphy,' Ronald Reagan and Mary Maguire, 60 min.

'Wine, Women and Horses,' 60 min.

'Patient in Room 18,' Ann Sheridan, 59 min.

'The Kid Comes Back,' Wayne Moris and June Travis, 61 min.

'He Couldn't Say No,' Frank McHugh and Jane Wyman, 61 min.

"We're ignoring the 'Great Garricks' and 'First Ladies,' which proved to be dish pictures after release; but which were originally intended to be upper-bracket pictures.

"Which of the above, Mr. Sears, do you think the exhibitors should get behind and exploit? And why? It would take the combined ad-skill of Charlie Einfeld, Howard Dietz and Pete Smith to coax the customers into the theatres on larries like these without dishes or cash give-aways.

"Some Broadway sage once said, 'It's always a good season for a good play.' Likewise, a good

(Continued on last page)



**"Who Killed Gale Preston?"  
with Don Terry and Wyn Cahoon**  
(Columbia, Feb. 24; time, 60 min.)

A fair program murder mystery melodrama. It should go over with the followers of this type of entertainment, for it keeps one guessing throughout—the murderer's identity is not revealed until the end. Several persons are suspected, each one having had a motive for murdering the victim. Although the manner in which the murderer is finally trapped into confessing is not novel, it is exciting. Since the murder takes place in a night club, the interpolated musical numbers are in order and add to the picture's entertainment value.

In the development of the plot, Rita Hayworth, a fiery-tempered night club singer, who had many enemies, is shot just as she had finished singing her number. Don Terry, police inspector, who had been called in to take charge of the case, chases after a suspect, (Dwight Frye). Frye climbs to the top of a building, shouting that he had killed her; he then kills himself by jumping from the roof. Terry learns that Frye had been Miss Hayworth's husband. But by checking the bullets from Frye's gun with the one taken from the victim, he finds out that Frye's bullet was not the one that had killed her. By investigating further, Terry discovers how the murder had been committed—a gun had been attached to the spotlight and had automatically gone off after a few turns of the different colored lights. He decides to trap the murderer by reenacting the crime; and his scheme works, for the murderer, who knew about the automatic control, begs that the lights be turned off. He confesses that he had killed Miss Hayworth because he loved her and she would have nothing to do with him. Wyn Cahoon, Miss Hayworth's sister, is happy when the case is settled, for both she and her sweetheart had been under suspicion.

Robert E. Kent and Henry Taylor wrote the original screen play, Leon Barsha directed it, and Ralph Cohn produced it. Robert Paige and others are in the cast.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Radio City Revels" with Jack Oakie,  
Bob Burns, Milton Berle, Victor Moore  
and Ann Miller**  
(RKO, Feb. 11; time, 90 min.)

Fairly good mass entertainment. The lavish production and the list of popular players are its main attractions, for the material is pretty weak. The action is slow in spots; and the comedy, except for one situation, is not of the uproarious type. The most comical situation is that in which Jack Oakie and Milton Berle use various methods to put Bob Burns, who was suffering from insomnia, to sleep; in the end they fall asleep from exhaustion. There is plentiful music, good singing by Kenny Baker and Jane Froman, and dancing by Ann Miller; the tunes are pleasant if not exceptional. Ann Miller and Kenny Baker are an acceptable romantic team:—

Oakie, a song writer, and Berle, his assistant, unable to sell their songs, make a living by selling a correspondence course in music to their only customer (Bob Burns), a show boat performer in Arkansas. Burns, discouraged at his progress, decides to go to New York to take his last four lessons at once. When he arrives at Oakie's apartment and claims to have lost his wallet, Berle wants to put him out; but Oakie permits him to stay. Burns falls in love with Ann Miller, Oakie's dancing protegee, but she is in love with Kenny Baker, a radio singer. Her sister (Helen Broderick) feels that Burns would make an ideal husband, and sets out to catch him for herself. Oakie and Berle discover that Burns, while asleep, composed beautiful songs which he would sing out loud. They copy the words and music as he sings them in his sleep, and then sell the songs as their own. This brings them considerable wealth, and a contract to write the music for a new broadcasting program. But Burns, who had found out about Miss Miller's love for Baker, cannot sleep for grief. By hitting him over the head, Berle finally puts him to sleep, and so is able to get the songs Oakie needed. Miss Broderick, who had found out about the trick, compels Oakie and Berle to admit that the songs belonged to Burns, and to turn the money over to him. Miss Broderick finally gets her man, thus making the way clear for Miss Miller, who would not leave her sister, to marry Baker.

Matt Brooke wrote the story, and he, Eddie Davis, Anthony Veiller, and Mortimer Offner, the screen play; Ben Stoloff directed it, and Edward Kaufman produced it. In the cast are Buster West, Melissa Mason, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Midnight Intruder" with Louis Hayward,  
J. C. Nugent and Barbara Read**  
(Universal, Feb. 6; time, 68 min.)

Good! Although the story is not particularly novel, it is presented in a refreshing way, enabling it to hold one's attention throughout. One feels sympathy for the hero, even though his actions in impersonating some one else are not commendable. As it turns out, however, it is all for the best, for by so doing he is able to bring about a reconciliation between a son and his parents. There is plentiful comedy, which is provoked by the many narrow escapes the hero and his pal have owing to the impersonation. To add to the excitement, a murder is committed, in which the hero and the man he was impersonating become involved. One is held in suspense until the real murderer is caught. The romance is pleasant:—

Louis Hayward and J. C. Nugent, his pal, race track frequenters, find themselves broke, hungry, and without shelter. While walking through a country road in the pouring rain, Hayward notices a house and, since it looked unoccupied, decides to break in, despite Nugent's pleas not to do so. They find a beautiful home, plentiful food, comfortable beds, and even night clothes. Just as they were ready to go to bed, they are disturbed by the arrival of servants, who were expecting the young son (Eric Linden) of their master, a newspaper publisher. Linden had left home several years previously to join a band. The servants, never having seen him, naturally think Hayward was the son and cater to him and to his pal. By reading a letter Linden had written to his mother, Hayward finds out that he had changed his mind about living in the house; and since the parents were in Europe, Hayward decides to take advantage of the situation and to live in comfort as long as he could. He meets and falls in love with Barbara Read, daughter of Selmar Jackson, a judge, who had become involved with a crooked politician. When this politician is murdered, Hayward believes Jackson had killed him. But the police arrest Linden, who had threatened the politician when he had become too attentive to his wife (Sheila Bromley). Eventually the real murderer is caught. Upon their return, the parents hear stories about their son's virtues and are proud. The mother learns it was really all Hayward's doings and thanks him, for it was through him that Linden and his parents had become reconciled. Hayward gets a job as a newspaper reporter, and then proposes to Miss Read.

Channing Pollock wrote the story, and Lester Cole, the screen play; Arthur Lubin directed it, and Trem Carr produced it. In the cast are Pierre Watkin, Joseph Crehan, and others.

Suitability, Class B.

**"Squadron of Honor" with Don Terry**  
(Columbia, Jan. 20; time, 55 min.)

A fairly exciting program melodrama, centering around the American Legion. Considering the popularity of the Legion, and the fact that the action takes place during one of their Conventions, it has good exploitation possibilities. The murder angle adds to the excitement. One is held in suspense in the closing scenes, when the Legionnaires close in on the murderers. A love interest is worked into the plot, but it is of minor importance:—

Robert Warwick, munitions manufacturer, tries to bribe Thurston Hall, American Legion Commander, to induce the Legionnaires to go on record as being opposed to an Arms Control Bill that was to come up in Washington. Because of Hall's refusal to do so, Warwick frames him. He does this by planting one of his men, dressed as a Legionnaire, in Hall's office; he then telephones to Arthur Loft, race track owner, who had been quarreling with Hall because he had demanded that Loft close the track during the Legion Convention. To go to see Hall. When Loft arrives, Warwick's henchman kills him with a gun owned by Hall. Hall is naturally held for the murder. The Legionnaires, headed by Don Terry, the District Attorney, refuse to believe their Commander guilty, and decide to investigate the case. They find sufficient proof to convince them of Warwick's guilt. They close in on him and his gang, forcing them to confess. Hall is freed. Terry, who had fallen in love with Warwick's secretary (Mary Russell), is happy to know that she was innocent of what had been going on.

Martin Mooney wrote the story, and Michael L. Simmons, the screen play; C. C. Coleman, Jr. directed it. In the cast are Marc Lawrence, Dick Curtis, George McKay and others.

The murder makes it unsuitable for children. Class B.



### "Blondes at Work" with Glenda Farrell and Barton MacLane

(Warner Bros., Feb. 5; time, 63 min.)

A moderately entertaining program comedy-melodrama. It is the third in the series of "Torchy Blane" stories, with the same players enacting the parts they did in the previous pictures. In substance, it is practically identical to the others, with Glenda Farrell, as the fast-working reporter, getting all the scoops in town, and outwitting the entire police force. For the most part, the story is far-fetched; as a matter of fact, there are a few supposedly serious spots that may be greeted by the spectators with laughs. One such situation is where Barton MacLane, the police lieutenant, having found a handkerchief with lipstick on it as a clue in the murder case, shows it to a young lady, who worked in the cosmetics department at a store; she just glances at it and knows what kind of lipstick it was and what type person would wear it. This time, less stress is laid on the romance.

In the development of the plot, a wealthy department store owner is found murdered at a hotel, where he had registered under an assumed name. Miss Farrell, ever on the alert to get scoops for her newspaper, finds the murder suspect, (Rosella Towne) before the police could get to her. She promises to help Miss Towne, who pleaded that she was innocent, if she would give herself up to the police. In the meantime, MacLane arrests Miss Towne's fiancé as the murderer. At the trial, the jury finds him guilty of first degree murder. Miss Farrell, who had sneaked into a room adjoining the jury room and thus been able to get the verdict to her newspaper before it was publicly announced, is held for contempt of court and sent to jail. She is annoyed when she hears that Miss Towne had herself confessed to the murder, and that she wasn't there to send the news to her paper. But MacLane cheers her up by showing her her newspaper with the story printed in it; he had sent it in for her.

Albert DeMond wrote the original screen play, Frank McDonald directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Tom Kennedy, John Ridgely, and others.

Since the murder is not actually shown, it is suitable for all. Class A.

### "Action for Slander" with Clive Brook

(London Film-United Art., Jan 14; time, 81½ min.)

This drama, revolving around a card-cheating scandal in British society, should appeal mostly to sophisticated audiences. The atmosphere is typically British and the players, with the exception of Clive Brook, are unknown here. The story lacks human appeal, because the hero (Clive Brook), who is the victim of the scandal, does not win one's sympathy. The reason for this is that, at the beginning, it is established that he was having an affair with a married woman, thereby bringing unhappiness to his charming wife. The fact that he later puts an end to this affair does not help matters much. The picture's highlight is the courtroom scene in the end, where the hero's lawyer tricks the accuser (Arthur Margetson), husband of the woman with whom Brook had been having the affair, into confessing that he had lied about the card-cheating episode. It is evident to the spectators that he had done so to avenge the wrong Brook had done him. The only sympathetic character is the wife (Ann Todd), for she shows nobleness in returning to Brook, when he needed her. It is because of her that he eventually brings the libel action, enabling him to clear his name and to take his place in society again. He and Miss Todd are reconciled.

Mary Borden wrote the story, and Miles Malleon, the screen play; Tim Whelan directed it, and Victor Saville produced it. In the cast are Ronald Squire, Percy Marmont, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "International Settlement" with George Sanders and Dolores Del Rio

(20th Century-Fox, Feb. 4; time, 83 min.)

A good program melodrama. Since part of the action takes place during an air raid in Shanghai, the producers have inserted newsreel shots of actual air raids and of people rushing for shelter; this adds considerable excitement. The story is somewhat far-fetched; since the action is, however, fast, it holds one's attention well throughout. And the constant danger to the hero and the heroine keeps one in suspense. June Lang and Dick Baldwin supply the light touch with their amusing antics and pleasant romance:—

George Sanders, soldier of fortune, undertakes a dangerous mission to act on behalf of Pedro DeCordoba, to collect \$1,000,000 for ammunitions DeCordoba had promised to deliver to Harold Huber and his partner (John

Carradine), in Shanghai. Sanders had to use DeCordoba's name to do so. The moment he registers in the hotel trouble starts: Dolores Del Rio, a café singer, mistaking him for DeCordoba, tries to shoot him. Her shot misses, and when she finds out that Sanders was not the man she wanted she is happy. She later explains to him that she wanted to kill DeCordoba because he had been responsible for her father's death. Sanders completes the deal and returns with the money to the boat, only to learn that DeCordoba had died of heart failure. Wanting to return the money to Huber, and not knowing where to find him, Sanders enlists Miss Del Rio's aid. She arranges to take him to Huber's house herself. But her husband (Leon Ames), having heard about the money, gets to Huber's house first; he kills Huber and wounds Carradine, who manages to escape. When Sanders arrives and is forced to turn the money over to Ames, he feels that Miss Del Rio had doublecrossed him. Ames shoots him in the arm. Just at that moment there is an air raid and Sanders is wounded, too. Miss Del Rio goes to his aid; frantically rushing to the streets, she brings back a doctor; she gives her blood to save him. When the doctor leaves, she goes out for help again; but by this time Sanders had regained consciousness and leaves. Under government orders, Americans are compelled to evacuate Shanghai. Miss Del Rio is overjoyed to find Sanders on the boat. But until he learns the facts from Miss Lang he refuses to talk to her. Miss Del Rio helps him get the money back from Ames, who, too, was on the boat. Carradine, another passenger, kills Ames. This clears the way for Sanders and Miss Del Rio to marry.

Lynn Root and Frank Fenton wrote the story, and Lou Breslow and John Patrick, the screen play; Eugene Forde directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Ruth Terry, Keye Luke, and others.

The shootings make it unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "Goldwyn Follies" with Adolphe Menjou, Andrea Leeds and Kenny Baker

(United Artists, Feb. 4; time, 121 min.)

An excellent box-office attraction, considering the magnificent technicolor work, the drawing power of the individual players, and the advance publicity the picture has been given. And the Hollywood background may still attract the masses. But it seems a pity that so much care should have been given to everything but the story, which, in itself, is trite. As a matter of fact, there is no story to speak of; it is more or less a grand and glorified vaudeville show, with individual acts that vary between very good and fair. The Ritz Brothers are, as usual, comical and provoke hearty laughter by their antics, despite the material given them. Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, in their few appearances, are good and should delight all their fans, who have become familiar with them through their broadcasts. The outstanding feature is the dancing by Zorina and by the members of the American Ballet. There is one scene in which they appear against a background of blue and white which, for sheer beauty, has not been surpassed—it is breathtaking. There are scenes of beauty throughout, as a result of the color photography. The music is good, varying from the operatic (sung by Helen Jepson) to the popular variety.

The story revolves around Andrea Leeds, a young country girl, who had been brought to Hollywood by Adolphe Menjou, a hardened producer, for he had felt that her humane reaction to things and to people about her would help him in his work. He sets her up in a house away from the studio and forbids her to meet or speak to actors, lest she would change. She meets and falls in love with Kenny Baker, a young tenor, who ran a hamburger wagon, but who aspired to become a motion picture star. She manages to get Menjou to listen to Baker sing over the radio, without letting him suspect that she had anything to do with it. Because she had expressed her delight with Baker's voice, Menjou engages him for a leading part in his picture. But when he learns the truth he is enraged, for he had planned to marry Miss Leeds himself. He informs her that, unless she married him, he would remake the picture with another singer in Baker's place; therefore, she agrees to marry him. Baker, having found out about Miss Leeds' position at the studio, berates her for having fooled him and insults her about her relationship with Menjou. But when he hears of her sacrifice, he cools down and rushes to her side. He informs Menjou that he would gladly give up his career to marry Miss Leeds. But Menjou, touched by the whole thing, relinquishes his claim on Miss Leeds, and blesses the lovers; he gives Baker a five year contract.

Ben Hecht wrote the story and the screen play; George Marshall directed it, and George Haight, in association with Mr. Goldwyn, produced it. In the cast are Phil Baker, Ella Logan, Bobby Clark, Nydia Westman, and others.

Class A.



picture needs no selling to the public and it's bad business to deceive the customers by selling a poor one. The Jimmy Fiddlers on the air and the Louella Parsons in the news sheets have established a pre-release grapevine that make most exploitation futile. The patrons pretty well know when a picture opens whether or not they want to see it.

"The truth of the matter is that no producer today makes more than a dozen pictures a year that can compete with the ten-inch plate or the \$500 jackpot. When give-aways stop making money for the exhibitors they'll discontinue them and not before. Any forced concerted attempt to ban all give-aways would bring about a complete dislocation in the industry far greater than the evil it seeks to correct.

"Maybe it's time to stop telling the exhibitors how to run their theatres and concentrate on the making of pictures to justify the present back-breaking rentals."

### THERE IS A RECESSION!

In a statement made to *Box Office* early last month, Mr. Joseph M. Schenck said that the drop in the gross receipts of the theatres has not been greater than ten per cent.

"It seems to me," he said partly, "that the picture business is not subject to the recession as much as any other business. It is not off much and very good films don't feel the recession.

"In towns where persons go to the movies four times a week, they naturally pick the best show first, the next best second, and so on until they have seen four pictures. In other towns where people go twice a week to the theatre they choose the first two pictures they think best. . . ."

Of course, Mr. Schenck has film to sell, and it is his business to present conditions brighter than they really are; but the facts, as gathered by this paper from reputable exhibitors, are as follows: big pictures draw as much as they drew before; but the other pictures draw one-half as much, and in many cases still less. They have told me that the drop of theatre attendance since last fall has been approximately thirty per cent, with no hope for much improvement until next fall.

According to all forecasts, there is going to be an improvement in business conditions this spring, but exhibition will not feel it much for two reasons: first, because there will be overdue grocery bills to pay before people will think of appropriating liberally for moving pictures, and secondly because the quality of the pictures will be worse than it was in the spring last year, by reason of the curtailment of production budgets. I have also heard it said on good authority that one major company has already spent \$22,000,000 out of an appropriation of \$30,000,000, for 19 pictures out of a total of more than 60 promised. If this information is correct, then this company must produce a minimum of 30 pictures at \$8,000,000, or approximately \$270,000 per picture; and since the studio overhead is approximately \$150,000 per picture, it will have to make these pictures at an actual expenditure of \$120,000 per picture. Can it be done by a major company? No! What will happen, then? Unless more money is appropriated, the pictures will have to be "slapped" together. And where is the money coming from, if the box offices will not yield it? Figure it out for yourself, if you are a magician!

### WAS SHAKESPEARE WRONG?

According to Douglas W. Churchill, Hollywood correspondent of the *New York Times*, Leo Spitz, President of RKO, and now heading that company's production in Hollywood, has dropped from his roster all players whose pictures have shown a loss at the box office, and has retained those whose pictures have shown a profit. It is a plan which, according to Mr. Churchill, Hollywood has considered unworkable.

Mr. Spitz is, no doubt, ambitious and wants to make a success of the job he has undertaken. But to HARRISON'S REPORTS he seems to have started from the wrong end: Dropping players who once meant something to the box office but whose later pictures did not show any profits, and retaining those players whose late pictures have shown profits, will not tend to make the pictures more entertaining; it is the adapting of good stories that will do it. Centuries ago Shakespeare said that the play is the thing and neither Mr. Spitz nor any other studio head can prove Shakespeare wrong.

MGM had a sad experience once with a picture that had six stars in it—"Night Flight," because it had no story. The six stars were the following: Clark Gable, Robert Montgomery, Myrna Loy, John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, and Helen Hayes, all at the height of their popularity at that time. Yet the picture flopped, even though it was produced on a lavish scale.

Further evidence that the story is the thing is the fact that many a star's popularity has been ruined by poor story material.

A producer needs players who will draw people to the box office, but above all he needs persons who know how to choose good stories—who know a good story from a bad one, and who have a full idea of the value of characterizations.

### ALL THE SHOUTING FOR NOTHING!

From time to time there are spread rumors to the effect that this, that, or the other major company has decided to move its home office to Hollywood, there to have production, distribution, and the publicity department under one roof. Such rumors give the trade press a chance to fill its columns for a while. But in every instance the report comes to nothing.

In the last few weeks similar rumors were again spread. This time, the trade papers assured their readers that it was no longer a rumor but a fact. In truth, they had it for sure that Warner Bros. were definitely committed to the removing of the two departments, distribution and publicity, to Hollywood.

That some of the Warner Bros. activities, particularly in the publicity line, have been transferred to the Coast is true, but it is hardly likely that this company's distribution department, too, or the distribution department of any of the other major companies, will be transferred there, for the reason that New York is the closest point to Europe and the European market cannot be taken care of properly from Hollywood. Nor can the American market, for that matter, by reason of the fact that the trade has come to look to New York for the transaction of business, and it is hard to change habits that have ingrained themselves so deeply in the consciousness of every one connected with the motion picture industry.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XX

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No. 7

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Rat, The—RKO (69 min.)	23
Romance of the Rockies—Monogram (53m.)	Not Reviewed
Rosalie—MGM (122 min.)	6
Saleslady—Monogram (64 min.)	22
Sergeant Murphy—Warner Bros. (57 min.)	6
Shadow, The—Columbia (57½ min.)	3
She's Got Everything—RKO (72 min.)	3
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs—RKO (86 min.)	10
Spirit of Youth—Grand National (66 min.)	7
Spy Ring—Universal (60½ min.)	11
Sudden Bill Dorn—Universal (59 min.)	Not Reviewed
Swing Your Lady—Warner Bros. (77 min.)	18
Tarzan's Revenge—20th Century-Fox (70 min.)	10
Tovarich—Warner Bros. (97 min.)	2
Trial of Portia Merriman, The—Republic (See "Portia on Trial")	182
West of Rainbow's End—Monogram (57m.)	Not Reviewed
Wise Girl—RKO (69½ min.)	2
Women in Prison—Columbia (58 min.)	15

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

8281 Hollywood Roundup—Buck Jones (64 min.)	Nov. 16
8008 She Married an Artist—Boles-Desti	Nov. 25
8028 All American Sweetheart—Colton-Farr	Nov. 30
8004 I'll Take Romance—Moore-Douglas	Dec. 1
8035 The Shadow—Quigley-Hayworth	Dec. 9

8282 Headin' East—Buck Jones (67 min.)	Dec. 13
8024 Under Suspicion—Jack Holt	Dec. 16
8202 Outlaws of the Prairie—C. Starrett (57m.)	Dec. 31
8034 Women in Prison—Cahoon-Colton	Jan. 1
8020 No Time to Marry—Arlen-Astor (64½m.)	Jan. 10
8007 Penitentiary—Connolly-Howard-Parker	Jan. 17
8030 Squadron of Honor—Terry-M. Russell	Jan. 20
Little Miss Roughneck—Fellows-Carrillo	Feb. 9
Cattle Raiders—C. Starrett	Feb. 12
Wide Open Faces—Joe E. Brown-J. Wyman	Feb. 15
8209 Heroes of the Alamo—Hodgins (75 min.)	Feb. 17
Who Killed Gale Preston—Hayworth	Feb. 24
Start Cheering—Durante-Starrett	Mar. 3
Rolling Caravans—E. Stewart-J. Luden	Mar. 7
Making the Headlines—Holt-Roberts	Mar. 10
The Lone Wolf Returns—Lederer-Drake	Mar. 17

## First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

270 She Loved a Fireman—Foran-Sheridan	Dec. 18
274 The Patient in Room 18—Knowles-Sheridan	Jan. 8
253 Hollywood Hotel—Powell-Lane-Healy	Jan. 15
279 The Daredevil Drivers—Roberts-Purcell	Feb. 12
255 Gold Is Where You Find It—Brent-Rains	Feb. 19

## Gaumont-British Features

(1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

## 1936-37 Season

Gangway—Jessie Matthews	Sept. 1
Dr. Syn—George Arliss	Oct. 15
Sez O'Reilly to MacNab—Fyffe-Mahoney	Nov. 20
Heart's Desire—R. Tauber	Available at any time

(End of season)

## Beginning of 1937-38 Season

Non-Stop New York—Anna Lee-John Loder	Nov. 17
I Was a Spy—M. Carroll-H. Marshall (Reissue)	Jan. 1
Look Out for Love—Neagle-Carmanati (reset)	Jan. 15
Wife of General Ling—Jones-Inkijino (70 min.)	Feb. 1
The Girl Was Young—Nova Pilbeam	Feb. 15
To the Victor—Fyffe-Loder-Lockwood	Mar. 1
Sailing Along—Jessie Matthews	Mar. 15

## Grand National Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

208 Trailin' Trouble—Ken Maynard (57 min.)	Sept. 24
210 Something to Sing About—James Cagney	Sept. 30
212 Renfrew of the Royal Mounted—Newill	Oct. 8
213 Wallaby Jim of the Islands—Houston	Oct. 15
211 Here's Flash Casey—Linden-Mallory	Oct. 22
214 Tex Rides with the Boy Scouts—Ritter	Oct. 29
215 Swing It Sailor—W. Ford-Jewell	Nov. 5
216 Mr. Boggs Buys a Barrel—Erwin	Nov. 12
220 Frontier Town—Tex Ritter (58 min.)	Nov. 19
207 King of the Sierras—Thunder Horse (Released also in the 1936-37 season as No. 131)	Nov. 26
299 Spirit of Youth—Joe Louis	Dec. 29

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

813 Thoroughbreds Don't Cry—Rooney-Garland	Nov. 26
814 Beg, Borrow or Steal—F. Morgan-Rice-Beal	Dec. 3
815 You're Only Young Once—Stone-Rooney	Dec. 10
No release set for	Dec. 17
816 Rosalie—E. Powell-Eddy-Bolger	Dec. 24
812 Bad Man of Brimstone—W. Beery-Bruce	Dec. 31
817 Man Proof—Loy-Russell-Tone-Pidgeon	Jan. 7
821 Love Is a Headache—George-Tone	Jan. 14
820 Mannequin—Crawford-S. Tracy-Curtis	Jan. 21
818 Paradise for Three (Three Men in the Snow)—F. Morgan—R. Young-Rice (reset)	Jan. 28
819 Everybody Sing—Garland-A. Jones-Owen	Feb. 4
822 Of Human Hearts—Huston-Stewart	Feb. 11
823 A Yank at Oxford—Taylor-O'Sullivan	Feb. 18
824 Arsene Lupin Returns—Douglas-William	Feb. 25
Merrily We Live—C. Bennett-Aherne-Burke	Mar. 4
Wooden Wedding—Montgomery-Bruce-William	Mar. 11
Girl of the Golden West—MacDonald-Eddy	Mar. 18



### Monogram Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 3743 Boy of the Streets—Jackie Cooper ..... Nov. 10  
3708 County Fair—J. Farrell MacDonald ..... Nov. 24  
3731 Romance of the Rockies—Keene (53 min.) .. Dec. 15  
3722 Telephone Operator—Allen-White (61m.) .. Jan. 5  
3727 West of Rainbow's End—McCoy No. 1 57m. Jan. 12  
3724 Saleslady—Nagel-Heyburn (reset) ..... Feb. 2  
3736 Where the West Begins—Randall (54 min.) .. Feb. 2  
3719 My Old Kentucky Home—Venable-Hall (r.) Feb. 16  
3733 The Painted Trail—Tom Keene ..... Feb. 16  
3725 The Port of Missing Girls—Allen-Stone .... Feb. 23

### Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 3717 Night Club Scandal—Overman-Barrymore.. Nov. 19  
3718 Blossoms on Broadway—Arnold ..... Nov. 19  
3719 Ebb Tide—Homolka-Milland-Farmer ..... Nov. 26  
3754 Texas Trail—Boyd-Hayes (58½ min.) .... Nov. 26  
3720 Love on Toast—Ardler-Payne ..... Dec. 3  
3721 Born to the West—Wayne-Brown (50m.) ... Dec. 10  
3765 Lives of a Bengal Lancer—Reissue ..... Dec. 10  
3722 Daughter of Shanghai—Wong-Ahn (62m.) .. Dec. 17  
3723 True Confession—Lombard-MacMurray ... Dec. 24  
3724 Wells Fargo—McCrea-Dee-Burns ..... Dec. 31  
3725 Bulldog Drummond's Revenge—Barrymore.. Jan. 7  
3726 Every Day's a Holiday—West-Lowe..... Jan. 14  
3727 Thrill of a Lifetime—Grable-Downs ..... Jan. 21  
3755 Partners of the Plains—Wm. Boyd (70m.) .. Jan. 28  
3728 The Buccaneer—March-Tamiroff ..... Feb. 4  
Scandal Street—Ayres-Campbell ..... Feb. 11  
Romance in the Dark—Swarthout-Boles .... Feb. 18  
3756 Cassidy of Bar 20—Wm. Boyd (56½ min.) .. Feb. 25  
Big Broadcast of 1938—Fields-Raye..... Mar. 4  
Dangerous to Know—Wong-Patrick-Hall ... Mar. 11  
Bluebeard's Eighth Wife—Colbert-Cooper .. Mar. 18

### Republic Features

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

#### 1936-37

- 6001 Portia on Trial—Inescort-Abel ..... Oct. 18  
(2 more to come)

#### 1937-38 Season

- 7122 Ridin' the Lone Trail—Bob Steele (56 m.) ... Nov. 1  
7101 Springtime in the Rockies—Autry (61 m.) .. Nov. 15  
7018 The Duke Comes Back—Lane-Angel-Tobin.. Nov. 22  
7113 Wild Horse Rodeo—Three Mesq. (57 m.) ... Nov. 29  
7017 Glamorous Night—Kruger-Ellis-Jory (61m.) Dec. 6  
7123 Colorado Kid—Bob Steele (56 min.) ..... Dec. 13  
7019 Exiled to Shanghai—Ford-Travis (65m.) ... Dec. 20  
7005 Lady Behave—Eilers-N. Hamilton ..... Jan. 5  
7124 Paroled to Die—Bob Steele (55 min.) ..... Jan. 10  
7006 Mama Runs Wild—Boland-Truex ..... Jan. 19  
7114 Purple Vigilantes—Three Mesq. (58m.) .... Jan. 24  
7102 Old Barn Dance—Autry (60m.) (reset) ... Jan. 29  
7007 Outside of Paradise—Regan-McNulty..... Feb. 7

### RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

#### 1936-37 Season

- 738 Damsel in Distress—Astaire-Fontaine ..... Nov. 19  
(more to come)

#### 1937-38 Season

- 810 High Flyers—Wheeler-Woolsey-Velez ..... Nov. 26  
812 Danger Patrol—Beal-Eilers-Carey ..... Dec. 3  
811 Quick Money—Fred Stone ..... Dec. 10  
814 Hitting a New High—Pons-Oakie-Howard .. Dec. 24  
815 Wise Girl—Hopkins-Milland-Abel ..... Dec. 31  
818 She's Got Everything—Sothorn-Raymond ... Dec. 31  
816 Crashing Hollywood—L. Tracy-Woodbury .. Jan. 7  
817 Everybody's Doing It—Foster-Eilers ..... Jan. 14  
862 The Rat—Walbrook-Chatterton-Ray ..... Jan. 21  
820 Double Danger—Foster-Bourne ..... Jan. 28

- 823 Radio City Revels—Oakie-Miller-Berle ..... Feb. 11  
821 Night Spot—Woodbury-Lane-Jones ..... Feb. 25  
(891 "Snow White," is ready for special release only)

### Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 824 Borrowing Trouble—Prouty-Byington ..... Dec. 10  
No release set for ..... Dec. 17  
831 Thank You, Mr. Moto—Lorre-Regan ..... Dec. 24  
825 Love and Hisses—Winchell-Bernie-Simon... Dec. 31  
833 City Girl—Brooks-Cortez-Wilcox ..... Jan. 7  
823 Tarzan's Revenge—Morris-Holm ..... Jan. 7  
829 Change of Heart (Headline Huntress)—  
Whalen-Stuart ..... Jan. 14  
828 Hawaiian Buckaroo—Ballew-Knapp-Regas .. Jan. 14  
832 Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo—W. Oland ... Jan. 21  
830 Happy Landing—Henie-Ameche-Romero ... Jan. 28  
826 International Settlement—Del Rio-Sanders .. Feb. 4  
834 Checkers—Withers-Erwin-Merkel ..... Feb. 11  
835 The Baroness and the Butler—W. Powell-  
Annabella ..... Feb. 18  
873 County Chairman—Will Rogers reissue ..... Feb. 18  
836 Love on a Budget—Prouty-Byington ..... Feb. 25  
827 Sally, Irene and Mary—Faye-Martin ..... Mar. 4  
Walking Down Broadway—Trevor-Brooks ... Mar. 11  
837 Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm—S. Temple ... Mar. 18  
819 Mr. Moto Takes a Chance—Lorre-Hudson .. Mar. 25  
839 Josette—Simon-Ameche-Young ..... Apr. 1

### United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Farewell Again—Banks-Robson (83 min.) ..... Oct. 8  
Stand-In—Howard-Blondell-Bogart ..... Oct. 29  
52nd Street—Baker-Paterson-Carrillo ..... Nov. 19  
Nothing Sacred—Lombard-March-Connolly ..... Nov. 26  
Murder on Diamond Row—Lowe-Shaw ..... Dec. 10  
The Hurricane—Lamour-Hall-Astor ..... Dec. 24  
Action for Slander—Brook-Todd ..... Jan. 14  
I Met My Love Again—Fonda-J. Bennett ..... Jan. 28  
The Goldwyn Follies—Leeds-Menjou-Baker ..... Feb. 4  
Adventures of Tom Sawyer—Kelly-Robson ..... Feb. 11  
Divorce of Lady X—Oberon-Barnes-Olivier .... Feb. 18  
Storm in a Teacup—Leigh-Harrison (86 min.) ... Feb. 25  
Adventures of Marco Polo—Cooper-Rathbone ... Mar. 4  
The Gaiety Girls—J. Hulbert-P. Ellis ..... Mar. 18  
Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel—Stewart ..... Mar. 25

### Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

#### 1936-37 Season

- A1006 Reported Missing—Gargan-Rogers ..... Aug. 15  
(more to come)

#### 1937-38 Season

- A2034 That's My Story—Morgan-Lundigan..... Oct. 24  
A2024 The Westland Case—Foster-Hughes ..... Oct. 31  
A2015 A Girl With Ideas—Barrie-Pidgeon ..... Nov. 7  
A2006 Merry Go Round of 1938—Mischa Auer ... Nov. 14  
A2052 Boss of Lonely Valley—B. Jones (59 m.) .. Nov. 14  
A2018 Some Blondes Are Dangerous—Gargan... Nov. 28  
A2054 Courage of the West—Bob Baker (57 m.) ... Dec. 5  
A2036 Adventure's End—John Wayne (63 min.) .. Dec. 5  
A2013 Prescription for Romance—Barrie ..... Dec. 12  
A2053 Sudden Bill Dorn—Buck Jones (59m.) ... Dec. 19  
A2004 You're a Sweetheart—Faye-Murphy ..... Dec. 26  
A2033 The Spy Ring—Hall-Wyman (reset) ..... Jan. 9  
A2019 The Jury's Secret—Taylor-Wray ..... Jan. 16  
A2055 The Singing Outlaw—Baker (56 min.) .... Jan. 23  
A2014 The Black Doll—Grey-Woods ..... Jan. 30  
A2016 The Midnight Intruder—Hayward-Read .. Feb. 6  
Forbidden Valley—Beery, Jr.-Robinson ... Feb. 13  
A2056 Border Wolves—Bob Baker ..... Feb. 25  
Mad About Music—Durbini-Marshall ..... Feb. 27  
State Police—William Hall ..... Mar. 4  
Crime of Dr. Hallett—Bellamy-Read .... Mar. 11  
Night Club Hostess—Rogers-Clyde ..... Mar. 18  
Goodbye Broadway—Brady-Winninger ... Mar. 25



## Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 201 Tovarich—Colbert-Boyer-Rathbone .....Dec. 25  
220 (216) Sergeant Murphy—Reagan-Maguire ..Jan. 1  
231 Bordertown—Paul Muni (reissue) .....Jan. 22  
224 The Invisible Menace—Karloff-Wilson .....Jan. 22  
211 Swing Your Lady—Bogart-Pendleton-McHugh  
.....Jan. 29  
225 Blondes at Work—Farrell-MacLane .....Feb. 5  
214 The Kid Comes Back—Morris-Travis .....Feb. 12  
226 Penrod and His Twin Brother—Mauch Twins.Feb. 26  
*(The production number of "It's Love I'm After," released  
on November 20, has been changed from 208 to 207.)*

## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

- 8802 Set 'Em Up—Sport Thrills (9½ m.) .....Oct. 29  
8903 Timberland Revels—B'way Follies (10 m.) ..Nov. 5  
8602 Silver Threads—Stra. As It Seems (10½ m.) Nov. 12  
8853 Screen Snapshots No. 3—(9½ min.) .....Nov. 18  
8701 Railroad Rhythm—K. Kat (6½ min.) .....Nov. 20  
8654 Community Sing No. 4—(10½ min.) .....Nov. 28  
8754 Scrappy's News Flashes—Scrappys (6 m.) ..Dec. 8  
8603 The Boy Who Saved a Nation—Strange As It  
Seems (10 min.) .....Dec. 10  
8904 Brokers' Follies—B'way Follies (10½ m.) ..Dec. 15  
8803 Cadet Champions—World of Sport (9m.) ..Dec. 17  
8503 Hollywood Picnic—Color Rhapsody (8m.) ..Dec. 18  
8854 Screen Snapshots No. 4—(10 min.) .....Dec. 24  
8552 El Salvador—Around the World (9 min.) ..Dec. 30  
8755 The New Homestead—Scrappys (7 min.) ..Jan. 7  
8855 Screen Snapshots No. 5—(9½ min.) .....Jan. 7  
8504 Bluebird's Baby—Color Rhapsody .....Jan. 21  
8804 Snow Foolin'—World of Sport (10 min.) ....Jan. 21  
8756 Scrappy's Trip to Mars—Scrappys .....Feb. 4  
8856 Screen Snapshots No. 6 .....Feb. 4  
8702 Sad Little Guinea Pigs—K. Kat .....Feb. 7  
8505 The Horse on the Merry-Go-Round—Color  
Rhapsody .....Feb. 17  
8805 Feminine Fun—World of Sport .....Feb. 18

### Columbia—Two Reels

- 8403 The Sitter-Downers—Stooge com. (15½ m.) Nov. 26  
8134 Murder at Sea—Jungle No. 14 (20½ m.) ....Dec. 1  
8141 The Howl of the Wolf—Mysterious Pilot No. 1  
(29 min.) .....Dec. 4  
8135 Give 'Em Rope—Jungle No. 15 (21 m.) .....Dec. 8  
8425 He Done His Duty—All star com. (17½ m.) Dec. 10  
8142 The Web Tangles—Pilot No. 2 (23½ m.) ....Dec. 11  
8143 Enemies of the Air—Pilot No. 3 (24½ m.) ....Dec. 18  
8426 Man Bites Love Bug—All Star com. (18m.) ..Dec. 24  
8144 In the Name of the Law—Pilot No. 4 (25m.) ..Dec. 25  
8145 The Crackup—Pilot No. 5 (24½ m.) .....Jan. 1  
8404 Termmites of 1938—Stooges comedy (14½ m.) Jan. 7  
8146 The Dark Hour—Pilot No. 6 (23m.) .....Jan. 8  
8147 Wings of Destiny—Pilot No. 7 (19½ m.) ....Jan. 15  
8427 Fiddling Around—All Star com. (17½ m.) ....Jan. 21  
8148 Battle in the Sky—Pilot No. 8 (23½ m.) ....Jan. 22  
8149 The Great Flight—Pilot No. 9 .....Jan. 29  
8428 A Doggone Mixup—All Star (18½ m.) .....Feb. 4  
8150 Whirlpool of Death—Pilot No. 10 .....Feb. 5  
8151 The Haunted Mill—Pilot No. 11 .....Feb. 12  
8405 Wee Wee Monsieur—Stooges comedy .....Feb. 18  
8152 The Lost Trail—Pilot No. 12 .....Feb. 19  
8153 The Net Tightens—Pilot No. 13 .....Feb. 26  
8429 The Old Raid Mule—All Star comedy .....Mar. 4  
8154 Vengeance Rides the Airways—Pilot No. 14. Mar. 5  
8155 Retribution—Pilot No. 15 .....Mar. 12  
8430 Time Out for Trouble—All Star comedy....Mar. 18

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

#### 1936-37 Season

- S-568 Romance of Radium—Pete Smith (10 m.) ..Oct. 23  
W-538 Little Buck Cheeser—Happy Harm. (8m.)..Dec. 18  
W-539 Bosko in Bagdad—Happy Harm. (10m.) ..Jan. 1  
W-540 Pipe Dream—Happy Harmony .....Feb. 5  
*(One more to come)*

#### 1937-38 Season

- H-721 The King Without a Crown—Historical  
Mysteries (9 min.) .....Oct. 9  
C-732 Pigskin Palooka—Our Gang (11 m.) .....Oct. 23

- T-653 Chile, Land of Charm—Travel. (9 min.) ...Oct. 30  
F-752 A Night at the Movies—Benchley (10 m.) ..Nov. 6  
C-733 Mail and Female—Our Gang (11 min.) ...Nov. 13  
H-722 The Man in the Barn—His. Myst. (10 m.) Nov. 20  
S-701 Decathlon Champion—Pete Smith (10 m.) Nov. 20  
T-654 Copenhagen—Traveltalks (9 min.) .....Nov. 27  
S-702 Candid Cameramanias—P. Smith (9m.) ..Dec. 11  
T-655 Land of the Incas—Traveltalks (9m.) ....Dec. 25  
M-671 What Do You Think No. 2—Minia. (10m.)..Dec. 25  
S-703 Friend Indeed—Pete Smith (10m.) .....Jan. 1  
M-672 What Do You Think No. 3—Minia. (11m.)..Jan. 15  
T-656 Natural Wonders of the West—Trav. (9m.)..Jan. 22  
H-723 Captain Kidd's Treasure—Hist. Myst. ....Jan. 22  
S-704 Jungle Juveniles No. 2—(9m.) .....Jan. 29  
M-673 Stroke of Genius—Miniatures .....Feb. 5  
S-705 Three on a Rope—Pete Smith .....Feb. 19  
T-657 Glimpses of Austria—Traveltalks .....Feb. 19

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- C-241 The Perfect Day—Laurel-Hardy re. (20m.) Dec. 11  
R-601 Our Gang Follies of 1938—Mus. (21m.) ...Dec. 18  
C-418 County Hospital—Laurel-Hardy reis. (19m.) Jan. 22  
R-602 The Canary Comes Across—Mus. (21m.) ..Jan. 29  
P-611 What Price Safety—Crime Doesn't Pay ...Feb. 5

### Specials

- J-771 Jimmy Fidler's Personality Parade (20m.) Jan. 8  
A-761 The New Audioscopiks (8m.) .....Jan. 15

### Paramount—One Reel

- J7-2 Popular Science No. 2—(10 min.) .....Nov. 12  
A7-5 From the Minuet to the Big Apple—Headliner  
(10 min.) .....Nov. 19  
E7-4 Protek the Weakerist—Popeye (7½ min.) ..Nov. 19  
T7-4 The Foxy Hunter—Betty Boop (7 min.) ...Nov. 26  
Sc7-2 Magic on Broadway—Screen song (7½ m.) Nov. 26  
EE7-1 Popeye the Sailor Meets Ali Baba's Forty  
Thieves—Special (17 min.) .....Nov. 26  
V7-5 Tuna—Paragraphics (9½ min.) .....Dec. 3  
P7-5 Paramount Pictorial No. 5—(9 min.) .....Dec. 3  
R7-5 Ball Tossers—Sportlight (9½ min.) .....Dec. 3  
L7-3 Unusual Occupations No. 3—(9½ min.) ....Dec. 10  
A7-6 Oh Kay, Rhythm—Headliner (9 min.) .....Dec. 17  
E7-5 Fowl Play—Popeye (7m.) .....Dec. 17  
T7-5 Hello Hawaii (Zula Hula)—Boop (6½ m.) ..Dec. 24  
V7-6 Accent on Beauty—Paragraphics (9½ m.) ..Dec. 24  
R7-6 Water Water Everywhere—Sport. (9m.) ....Dec. 31  
C7-3 Little Lamby—Color Classic (7½ m.) .....Dec. 31  
A7-7 Meet the Maestros—Headliner (10m.) ....Jan. 7  
P7-6 Paramount Pictorial No. 6—(9m.) .....Jan. 7  
J7-3 Popular Science No. 3—(10m.) .....Jan. 14  
E7-6 Let's Celebrate—Popeye (7m.) .....Jan. 21  
A7-8 Humber Harmonies—Headliner (10m.) ....Jan. 28  
V7-7 California Giants—Paragraphics (9m.) ....Jan. 28  
R7-7 Good Looking Winners—Sportlight (9m.) ..Jan. 28  
T7-6 Riding the Rails—Boop (6m.) .....Jan. 28  
SC7-3 You Took the Words Right Out of My  
Heart—Screen Song (8m.) .....Jan. 28  
P7-7 Paramount Pictorial No. 7—(10m.) .....Feb. 4  
L7-4 Unusual Occupations No. 4 .....Feb. 11  
A7-9 Listen to Lucas—Headliner .....Feb. 18  
E7-7 Learn Politeness—Popeye (7m.) .....Feb. 18  
V7-8 Gold—Paragraphics .....Feb. 25  
R7-8 A Fascinating Adventure—Sport. (9½ m.) ..Feb. 25  
T7-7 Be Up to Date—Betty Boop .....Feb. 25  
C7-4 The Tears of an Onion—Color Classic .....Feb. 25  
P7-8 Paramount Pictorial No. 8 .....Mar. 4  
A7-10 The Star Reporter No. 3—Headliner ....Mar. 10

### RKO—One Reel

*(There have been a few changes made in the release sched-  
ule for the one-reelers, and so we are reprinting the releases  
from the beginning of the season.)*

#### Beginning of 1937-38 Season

- 84401 A Frozen Affair—Condor mus. (10m.) ...Aug. 27  
84601 Pathe Parade—(13m.) .....Sept. 10  
84201 Rhythm in a Night Court—Nu Atlas (10m) Sept. 24  
84101 Hawaiian Holiday—Disney cart. (8m.) ...Sept. 24  
84102 Clock Cleaners—Disney cart. (8m.) .....Oct. 15  
84202 Phony Boy—Nu Atlas Musical (11m.) (r.) Oct. 15  
84602 Pathe Parade—(11m.) .....Nov. 5  
84103 The Old Mill—Disney cart. (9m.) .....Nov. 5



84402 Murder in Swing Time—Condor (10m) (r) Nov. 19  
 84403 Prairie Swingaroo—Musical (10m.) (r.) Nov. 19  
 84203 Sweet Shoe—Nu Atlas musical (11m) (r) Nov. 26  
 84104 Pluto's Quinuplets—Disney (8½m.) Nov. 26  
 84204 Deviled Ham—Nu Atlas (10m.) Dec. 3  
 84105 Donald's Ostrich—Disney cart. (9m.) Dec. 10  
 84106 Lonesome Ghosts—Disney cart. (9m.) Dec. 24  
 84603 Pathe Parade—(10m.) (reset) Jan. 14  
 84205 A Radio Hook-Up—Nu Atlas (10m.) Jan. 28  
 84301 White Magic—Sportsopes (10m.) Jan. 28  
 84107 Self Control—Disney cart. (9m.) Feb. 11  
 84206 Latin Rhythm—Nu Atlas (11m.) Feb. 18

### RKO—Two Reels

83104 March of Time No. 4—(20 min.) Nov. 26  
 83501 Harris in the Spring—Phil Harris (20 m.) Dec. 3  
 83301 Rhythm Ranglers—Smart Set (19 m.) Dec. 17  
 83105 March of Time—(19m.) Dec. 24  
 83703 The Dummy Owner—Leon Errol (19m.) Jan. 7  
 83106 March of Time—(16m.) Jan. 21  
 83403 Ears of Experience—E. Kennedy (18m.) Jan. 28  
 83602 Music Will Tell—Headliner (18m.) Feb. 11  
 83107 March of Time Feb. 18  
 83202 The Stupor-Visor—Radio Flash. (17m.) Feb. 25

### Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

4704 Italian Libya—Road Romance (10 m.) Nov. 12  
 8907 Calling All Crooners—Song com. hit (10m.) Nov. 19  
 8906 Trailer Paradisc—Cabin Kids (8½m.) Nov. 26  
 8508 The Timid Rabbit—Terry-Toon (6½m.) Nov. 26  
 2605 Filming Nature's Wonders—Adv. News  
 Camera (8½m.) Dec. 3  
 8603 Not So Dumb—Treasure Chest (9m.) Dec. 10  
 8509 The Billy Goat's Whiskers—T. T'n (6½m.) Dec. 10  
 4705 The Land of the Maple Leaf—Road to  
 Romance (9½m.) Dec. 10  
 8909 How to Dance the Shag—Song Hit (7½m.) Dec. 17  
 8605 Grey Owl's Little Brother—T. Toon (10½m.) Dec. 24  
 8510 Barnyard Boss—Terry-Toon (6½m.) Dec. 24  
 8908 Love Goes West—Song Hit (10½m.) Dec. 31  
 8511 The Lion Hunt—Terry-Toon (7m.) Jan. 7  
 2606 Trailing Animal Stories—Adv. News (8½m.) Jan. 14  
 8512 Bugs Beetle and His Orch.—T. T. (6½m.) Jan. 21  
 4706 Modern Dixie—Along Rd. Rom. (10m.) Jan. 28  
 8513 His Off Day—Terry-Toon (6½m.) Feb. 4  
 8606 Songbirds of the North Woods—T. Chest Feb. 11  
 8514 Just Ask Jupiter—Terry-Toon (6½m.) Feb. 18

### Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

8111 Hooray for Hooligan—West-Patricola Nov. 19  
 8108 Playboy Number One (Bon Voyage)—Willie  
 Howard (17½ min.) Nov. 26  
 8202 The Bashful Buckaroo—C. Kemper (20 m.) Dec. 3  
 8110 Koo-Koo Korrespondence Skool—Jefferson  
 Machamer (18½ min.) Dec. 10  
 8112 Dime a Dance—Coca-Kaye (19 min.) Dec. 24  
 8307 Dates and Nuts—Timberg-Rooney (19m.) Dec. 31  
 8203 Hi Ho Hollywood—Hutchins (16½m.) Jan. 7  
 8113 Air Parade—Niela Goodelle (19½m.) Jan. 14  
 8204 Getting an Eyeful—C. Kemper (18m.) Jan. 21  
 8114 The Miss They Missed—W. Howard (18m.) Jan. 28  
 8115 Cupid Takes a Holiday—D. Kaye (15½m.) Feb. 4  
 8303 Uncle Sol Solves It—Mirthquake Feb. 11

### Universal—One Reel

A2387 Stranger Than Fiction No. 43 (9 min.) Nov. 29  
 A2275 The Mysterious Jug—Oswald (7 min.) Nov. 29  
 A2374 Going Places with Thomas No. 43 (9 min.) Dec. 6  
 A2276 Dumb Cluck—Oswald (7 min.) Dec. 20  
 A2388 Stranger Than Fiction No. 44 (9 min.) Dec. 27  
 A2375 Going Places with Thomas No. 44 (9m.) Jan. 3  
 A2277 The Lamplighter—Oswald cart. (7m.) Jan. 10  
 A2389 Stranger Than Fiction No. 45 (9m.) Jan. 17  
 A2376 Going Places with Thomas No. 45 (9m.) Jan. 31  
 A2278 Man Hunt—Oswald cartoon (7m.) Feb. 7  
 A2390 Stranger Than Fiction No. 46 (9m.) Feb. 21  
 A2377 Going Places with Thomas No. 46 (9m.) Feb. 28

### Universal—Two Reels

A2791 The Hidden Menace—Radio No. 11 (20 m.) Dec. 13  
 A2792 They Get Their Man—Radio No. 12 (20m.) Dec. 20  
 A2881 Jungle Pirates—Tim Tyler's Luck No. 1  
 (21 min.) Dec. 27  
 A2165 Oh, Say Can You Hear?—Mentone (15 m.) Dec. 29  
 A2882 Dead Man's Pass—Tyler No. 2 (21 m.) Jan. 3  
 A2883 Into the Lion's Den—Tyler No. 3 (21 m.) Jan. 10  
 A2884 The Ivory Trail—Tyler No. 4 (21m.) Jan. 17  
 A2885 Trapped in the Quicksand—Tyler No. 5  
 (20 min.) Jan. 24  
 A2166 Rhapsody in Zoo—Mentone (15½m.) Jan. 26  
 A2886 The Jaws of the Jungle—Tyler No. 6  
 (21½ min.) Jan. 31  
 A2887 King of the Gorillas—Tyler No. 7 (20m.) Feb. 7  
 A2888 The Spider Caught—Tyler No. 8 (21m.) Feb. 14  
 A2889 The Gates of Doom—Tyler No. 9 (21m.) Feb. 21  
 A2167 Down on the Barn—Mentone Feb. 23  
 A2160 Breathless Moments—Special Feb. 28  
 A2890 A Race for Fortune—Tyler No. 10 (21m.) Feb. 28  
 A2891 No Man's Land—Tyler No. 11 (20m.) Mar. 7

### Special

A2472 Bombing of the U.S.S. Panay—(22m.) Dec. 30

### Vitaphone—One Reel

3503 Mysterious Ceylon—Color-Tour (10 m.) Nov. 20  
 3303 Danger High Voltage (The Live Corpse)—True  
 Adventures (13 min.) Dec. 4  
 3705 Jan Rubini & Orch.—Mel. Mas. (10½ m.) Dec. 4  
 3904 Vitaphone Frolics—Varieties (10½ m.) Dec. 4  
 3203 Pure Feud—Edgar Bergen reissue (10 m.) Dec. 4  
 3404 Woods Are Full of Cuckoos—M. M. (7½ m.) Dec. 4  
 3604 Porky's Hero Agency—L. Tunes (7½ m.) Dec. 4  
 3804 Clem McCarthy-Boxers-Dolls—Pictorial  
 Revues (11 min.) Dec. 11  
 3405 September in the Rain—Mer. Mel. (6½ m.) Dec. 18  
 3204 Africa Speaks English—Bergen re. (10 m.) Dec. 18  
 3504 Land of the Kangaroo—Color-Tour (10½m.) Dec. 18  
 3304 Alibi Mark—True Adventures (13 m.) Dec. 25  
 3706 Henry King and Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.) Dec. 25  
 3205 Two Boobs in a Balloon—Bergen re. (10m.) Jan. 1  
 3406 Daffy Duck and Egghead—Mer. Mel. (7½.) Jan. 1  
 3505 India's Millions—Color-Tour (10m.) Jan. 8  
 3805 Ice Cream-Jockeys-Ncgligees—Pic. (10m.) Jan. 8  
 3905 Unreal Newsreel—Varieties (9m.) Jan. 8  
 3206 Free and Easy—Bergen reissue (10m.) Jan. 15  
 3709 Leon Navarro & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.) Jan. 15  
 3605 Porky's Poppa—Looney Tunes (7m.) Jan. 15  
 3908 Ski Flight—Varieties (10m.) Jan. 22  
 3305 The Bolted Door—True Adv. (13m.) Jan. 22  
 3407 My Little Buckaroo—Mer. Mel. (7½m.) Jan. 29  
 3708 Enric Madriguera & Orch.—Mel. M. (10m.) Jan. 29  
 3507 Malayan Jungles—Color-Tour (10m.) Feb. 5  
 3606 Porky at the Crocadero—L. Tunes (7½m.) Feb. 5  
 3806 Kellogg Ranch-Hockey-Shoes—Pict. (10m.) Feb. 5  
 3710 Carl Hoff & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10m.) Feb. 12  
 3906 Alibi Time—Varieties (11m.) Feb. 12  
 3306 Hit and Run—True Adventures (13m.) Feb. 19  
 3408 Jungle Jitters—Mer. Melodies (7m.) Feb. 19  
 3807 Dogs-Billiards-Lithography—Pictorial Mar. 5  
 3707 Benny Meroff & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.)  
 (re.) Mar. 5  
 3409 Sneezing Weasel—Mer. Melodies (7m.) Mar. 12  
 3502 What the World Makes—Color-Tour Mar. 12  
 3907 Vitaphone Gambols—Varieties (10½m.) Mar. 19

### Vitaphone—Two Reels

3002 Man Without a Country—Tech. (21 m.) Nov. 27  
 3014 Here's Your Hat (A Tip for Cinderella)—  
 Revues (21 min.) Dec. 11  
 3026 One on the House—Gayeties (20 min.) Dec. 18  
 3021 Wedding Yells—Murray-Oswald (21 m.) Jan. 1  
 3009 Script Girl—Headliners (21m.) Jan. 15  
 3003 Romance Road—Tech. Prod. (19m.) Jan. 29  
 3015 The Candid Kid—Revue (20m.) Feb. 12  
 3027 Not Yet Titled—Gay-Eties Feb. 26  
 3010 Little Me—Wini Shaw Mar. 5  
 3005 Romance of Louisiana—Technicolor Mar. 12

### NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES Universal

640 Saturday Feb. 12  
 641 Wednesday Feb. 16  
 642 Saturday Feb. 19  
 643 Wednesday Feb. 23  
 644 Saturday Feb. 26  
 645 Wednesday Mar. 2  
 646 Saturday Mar. 5  
 647 Wednesday Mar. 9  
 648 Saturday Mar. 12  
 649 Wednesday Mar. 16  
 650 Saturday Mar. 19  
 651 Wednesday Mar. 23  
 652 Saturday Mar. 26  
 653 Wednesday Mar. 30

### Fox Movietone

44 Saturday Feb. 12  
 45 Wednesday Feb. 16  
 46 Saturday Feb. 19  
 47 Wednesday Feb. 23  
 48 Saturday Feb. 26  
 49 Wednesday Mar. 2  
 50 Saturday Mar. 5  
 51 Wednesday Mar. 9  
 52 Saturday Mar. 12  
 53 Wednesday Mar. 16  
 54 Saturday Mar. 19  
 55 Wednesday Mar. 23  
 56 Saturday Mar. 26  
 57 Wednesday Mar. 30

### Paramount News

55 Saturday Feb. 12  
 56 Wednesday Feb. 16  
 57 Saturday Feb. 19  
 58 Wednesday Feb. 23  
 59 Saturday Feb. 26  
 60 Wednesday Mar. 2  
 61 Saturday Mar. 5  
 62 Wednesday Mar. 9  
 63 Saturday Mar. 12  
 64 Wednesday Mar. 16  
 65 Saturday Mar. 19  
 66 Wednesday Mar. 23  
 67 Saturday Mar. 26  
 68 Wednesday Mar. 30

### Metrotone News

242 Saturday Feb. 12  
 243 Wednesday Feb. 16  
 244 Saturday Feb. 19  
 245 Wednesday Feb. 23  
 246 Saturday Feb. 26  
 247 Wednesday Mar. 2  
 248 Saturday Mar. 5  
 249 Wednesday Mar. 9  
 250 Saturday Mar. 12  
 251 Wednesday Mar. 16  
 252 Saturday Mar. 19  
 253 Wednesday Mar. 23  
 254 Saturday Mar. 26  
 255 Wednesday Mar. 30

### Pathe News

85159 Sat. (O.) Feb. 12  
 85260 Wed. (E.) Feb. 16  
 85161 Sat. (O.) Feb. 19  
 85262 Wed. (E.) Feb. 23  
 85163 Sat. (O.) Feb. 26  
 85264 Wed. (E.) Mar. 2  
 85165 Sat. (O.) Mar. 5  
 85266 Wed. (E.) Mar. 9  
 85167 Sat. (O.) Mar. 12  
 85268 Wed. (E.) Mar. 16  
 85169 Sat. (O.) Mar. 19  
 85270 Wed. (E.) Mar. 23  
 85171 Sat. (O.) Mar. 26  
 85272 Wed. (E.) Mar. 30



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1938

No. 8

## COOPERATIVE ADVERTISING SHOULD NOT BE DROPPED

A representative of Warner Bros. has announced that his company will discontinue joining hands with the exhibitor in advertising certain pictures by sharing the cost of advertising. As a reason, he gives the fact that many exhibitors have taken advantage of Warner Bros. by not spending in the advertising partnership as much money as they spent before.

According to *Motion Picture Herald*, S. Barrett McCormick, advertising and publicity director of RKO, stated that it is impossible for an exhibitor to take advantage of a distributor in cooperative advertising, by reason of the fact that a distributor may easily check up the advertising that had been done by an exhibitor individually over a long period of time; such distributor could then compel the exhibitor to live up to his agreement.

Since the pictures that bring the real money to the distributor are played on percentage, dropping the cooperative advertising will injure the distributor as much as the exhibitor, for the less a picture takes in the less the distributor will receive.

It seems to this paper as if there is no more justification to this complaint than there is to Gradwell Sears' complaint against the exhibitors for trying to increase their business by means of premium nights instead of confining themselves to exploiting the pictures.

Not only should cooperative advertising be continued; it should be complemented by institutional advertising. As matters now stand, the advertising done for each particular picture benefits the distributor and the exhibitor who plays it only for that picture; there is not much good will created among the public. Institutional advertising, that is, advertising that mentions the industry and not any particular picture, will benefit the entire industry far more, for it will create good will for the entire industry and not for any particular company.

Institutional advertising is needed to give the picture-going habit to millions who are not going to picture shows now. It should be coupled with a picture-going period, for one month at least, during, not the fall, but the spring. Either May, or the period between May 15 and June 15, should prove much more advantageous than the month of August.

## NEELY BLOCK-BOOKING BILL REPORTED FAVORABLY OUT OF COMMITTEE

The Neely Bill (S. 153), which is the same as the Pettengill Bill now pending before the House of Representatives, and which is designed to outlaw block-booking as well as blind-selling of motion pictures, has been reported favorably out of

the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce. In other words, the Committee recommended to the Senate that this Bill be passed.

No hearing was held, the previous hearings for the same Bill being considered sufficient to make its purport known to the public.

The move of the Committee places the Bill on the Senate Calendar for action when bills reported favorably by the different Senate committees are to be considered.

Because of the fact that, when a Senator asks that a particular bill be "passed over," the bill remains on the calendar, no vote being taken whether such bill should or should not be "passed over," ability of the proponents of the Neely Bill to bring it to a vote without a dissenting voice depends on the voters back home. For this reason every one of you should write to the Senators from your state as well as to every Senator you should happen to know, urging them to support Bill S. 153. In addition, you should urge as many of the prominent citizens of your town as you can to write to your Senators urging them to give this Bill their whole-hearted support. No time is to be lost. Remember that a large number of civic, fraternal, and religious organizations are supporting this Bill actively.

The Pettengill Bill (H. R. 1669), which is, as said, companion to the Neely Bill, is still before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce.

Passage of the Neely Bill by the Senate should exert much influence in obtaining favorable action on the Pettengill Bill by the House Committee. For this reason you should see to it that your Senators are swamped with mail, telegrams, or telephone calls, urging immediate action on the Bill. In addition, you should urge that similar messages be sent also to Hon. Clarence F. Lea, Chairman of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, as well as every member of the Committee. Their names are as follows:

Robert Crosser, Ohio; Alfred L. Bulwinkle, North Carolina; Virgil Chapman, Kentucky; Paul H. Maloney, Louisiana; William P. Cole, Jr., Maryland; Samuel B. Pettengill, Indiana; Edward A. Kelly, Illinois; George G. Sadowski, Michigan; John A. Martin, Colorado; Edward C. Eicher, Iowa; Martin J. Kennedy, New York; Thomas J. O'Brien, Illinois; Henry Ellenbogen, Pennsylvania; Herron Pearson, Tennessee; Jerry J. O'Connell, Montana; George B. Kelly, New York; Lyle H. Boren, Oklahoma; Gardner R. Withrow, Wisconsin; Carl E. Mapes, Michigan; Charles A. Wolverson, New Jersey; James Wolfenden, Pennsylvania; Pehr G. Holmes, Massachusetts; B. Carroll Reece, Tennessee; James W. Wadsworth, New York; Charles A. Halleck, Indiana.



**"Night Spot" with Parkyakarkus,  
Allan Lane and Joan Woodbury**  
(RKO, February 25; time, 60 min.)

Ordinary program fare. The story, which is developed on the familiar pattern without any new angles, offers only moderate excitement. Even the performances are only fair; but this is probably due to the fact that the players were unable to cope with the material at hand. The burlesqued detective part played by Parkyakarkus is entirely out of keeping with the melodramatic mood of the story. The closing scenes, during which the gangster leader tries to escape by using the heroine as his shield against the police, are exciting in spots; but the method employed by the hero to trap the gangster is so ludicrous that audiences may be amused instead of thrilled. The routine romance is fairly pleasant:—

Without suspecting that she was shielding a criminal, Joan Woodbury testifies on behalf of Bradley Page, gangster owner of a night club, in a murder action. Her testimony brings about his acquittal. To show his appreciation, he gives her a job as a singer in his club. There she meets and falls in love with Allan Lane, one of the musicians; she was unaware of the fact that he and his musician friend (Gordon Jones) were detectives, who were trying to get evidence to prove that Page and his gang were jewel thieves. Lane finally gets the information he needed; he discovers that, through microphones attached to the lamp on each table, Page could listen in on comments by his patrons about the jewels they owned, and could plan his robberies accordingly. When Page is trapped, he grabs Miss Woodbury, to use as his protection against the police. He takes her to the edge of the roof and threatens to throw her to her death unless the police left. Lane risks his life to save her. He succeeds; and Page is arrested.

Anne Jordan wrote the story, and Lionel Houser, the screen play; Christy Cabanne directed it, and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are Frank Thomas, and others.

The activities of the gangsters make it unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Start Cheering" with Walter Connolly,  
Jimmy Durante, Charles Starrett  
and Joan Perry**  
(Columbia, March 3; time, 77 min.)

This comedy with music should go over well with the masses. The plot is unimportant; it is used just to tie together a series of vaudeville acts and musical numbers. Although not big as compared with some of the musicals produced by Metro and Warner, it is peppy entertainment, with a youthful spirit, and it has plentiful comedy, music, and dancing. One of the specialty acts that should go over big with audiences is that which shows Chaz Chase eating lit cigarettes, papers, and anything he could lay his hands on. Jimmy Durante handles most of the comedy in his customary style, provoking laughter by his misuse of words and his outbursts of temper. The romance is pleasing:—

Charles Starrett, motion picture star, tired of Hollywood, is determined to leave picture work in order to go to college. This decision almost drives insane Walter Connolly, his manager, whose livelihood depended on Starrett's continuing to work. So Connolly and his assistant (Durante) follow Starrett to college, in an effort to get him ousted. But their efforts are in vain, for the college needed some one sensational on their football team in order to bolster up the depleted treasury, and Starrett was the answer to their prayer. But the students, thinking that Starrett had enrolled just for publicity, ignore him, thus making him unhappy; his only friend was Joan Perry, the Dean's daughter, who had fallen in love with him. At Miss Perry's request, the students agree to take Starrett into their fraternity; they put him through the regular initiation and then put a pin on him. Starrett later finds out that the boys had played a joke on him, and that he really did not belong to the fraternity. Disgusted, he leaves the college for New York. But by this time Connolly did not want him to leave, for he had put through a deal for Starrett to broadcast from the college grounds. After a hectic chase, Connolly finds Starrett and gets him back to college in time to complete the broadcast. The students apologize to Starrett, making him happy. He declares his love for Miss Perry.

The plot was adapted from the story "College Hero," by Corey Ford; Eugene Solow, Philip Rapp and Richard Wormser wrote the screen play, Albert S. Rogell directed it, and Nat Perrin produced it. In the cast are Three Stooges, Virginia Dale, Ernest Truex, and others.

Suitable for all. Class A.

**"The Girl Was Young" with Nova Pilbeam**  
(Gaumont-British, February 15; time, 70 min.)

Good melodramatic entertainment. Because of the novelty of the story, the interesting plot developments, and the expert direction by Alfred Hitchcock, one's attention is held from the beginning to the end. Particularly thrilling are the closing scenes, where the heroine searches for the murderer at a hotel, her only clue being that he had a nervous twitching of the eyes. The manner in which the breakdown of the murderer is brought about holds one in tense suspense. The background is England:—

When a well known actress is found strangled to death, the police arrest Derrick deMarney, an acquaintance of hers, who had found the body. The belt she had been strangled with belonged to a raincoat, and the police scoff at deMarney's story that his raincoat had been stolen. He escapes from the police, his one desire being to find the person who had stolen his raincoat and thus establish his innocence. He unwittingly drags into the case Nova Pilbeam, the Constable's daughter, into whose car he had jumped. At first she is reluctant to help him or to believe in him; but in a short time she realizes he was telling her the truth, and so she decides to help him. Their investigations lead them from a pub to a hobo hotel, where deMarney finds the tramp who had his coat. The tramp swears that he had not stolen it, but that it had been given to him by a man who had a peculiar twitch of the eyes. Through a package of matches, which bore the name of a certain hotel, they get their first clue. Miss Pilbeam and the tramp go to the hotel, to search for the mysterious man. When the police close in on them and the case seems most hopeless, they suddenly find their man—a musician (George Curzon) in the orchestra. He hysterically admits that he had killed the actress, his wife, because he believed she had been having affairs with other men. His name cleared, deMarney declares his love for Miss Pilbeam.

Josephine Tey wrote the story, and Charles Bennett, Edwin Greenwood, and Anthony Armstrong, the screen play; Mr. Hitchcock directed and produced it. In the cast are Edward Rigby, Percy Marmount, and others.

The murder makes it unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Scandal Street" with Lew Ayres  
and Louise Campbell**  
(Paramount, February 11; time, 61 min.)

Mild program fare. It revolves around malicious small-town gossip characters, whose actions are annoying, to say the least. With the exception of a few spots in which Virginia Weidler, an imaginative child, provokes laughs by her antics, the comedy falls flat, for it is neither novel nor particularly comical. The injection of the murder angle fails to add excitement or to hold one in suspense, for one knows who the murderer is. Nor is the manner in which his confession is obtained edifying, for it is brought about by the made-up stories of little Virginia, who hated him and felt certain that he was the murderer. Lew Ayres is lost in a negative part; he makes but two appearances—once in the beginning and then again at the end:—

When her sweetheart (Ayres) leaves for the tropics in connection with his work, Louise Campbell goes to a small town to establish a new library. Her good looks and pleasing manner set the women, including Elizabeth Patterson, with whom she boarded, against her. Roscoe Karns, married to wealthy Esther Howard, tries to force his attentions on Miss Campbell, but she resists him. The women in the town believe, however, that she was leading him on. Karns, who had entered into a mail-order scheme with Porter Hall, a new-comer to the town, finds out that the scheme was illegal. He telephones Hall, urging him to call to see him immediately. In the meantime, Miss Campbell, who wanted to return some money she had borrowed from Karns, calls while his wife was out. Karns' manner offends her and she soon leaves; but later she returns for her glasses, which she had inadvertently left there. When she finds Karns dead, she is horror-stricken; circumstances are against her and she is held for the murder. Ayres arrives in town the day of the questioning and naturally stands by his fiancée. The neighbors, because of their evil minds, build up a case against Miss Campbell; they all testify against her. But little Virginia, who loved Miss Campbell, gives Ayres information that helps him trap Hall into confessing that he had killed Karns. Miss Campbell, freed, is glad to leave the hateful town with Ayres, whom she was going to marry.

Very Casperly wrote the story, and Bertram Millhauser and Eddie Welch, the screen play; James Hogan directed it. In the cast are Cecil Cunningham and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



**"Penitentiary" with Walter Connolly,  
John Howard and Jean Parker**  
(Columbia, January 17; time, 78 min.)

A fairly strong prison melodrama. When this was first made by Columbia in 1931 under the title "The Criminal Code," it was excellent entertainment, holding one in tense suspense. But the remake is not as effective as the first version. For one thing, the background and action are not as novel now as they were in 1931, owing to the fact that many prison melodramas have been produced since then. For another, the tempo seems to be slower here. It is doubtful if women will find this very enjoyable, for some of the situations are pretty gory; the scene in which a prisoner stabs a guard and then is shot down himself is sickening. The pleasantest part is the hero's regeneration under the heroine's influence:—

Howard, while intoxicated, loses his head during a quarrel and kills a man. Since the murder had not been premeditated, he is convicted and sentenced to a ten year prison term. By the end of six years his spirit is broken and he is on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Walter Connolly, the former district attorney, who had been instrumental in sending Howard to prison, becomes the warden. The prison doctor brings Howard's case to his attention, recommending a change in prison work. Connolly makes Howard his chauffeur. Howard falls in love with Jean Parker, the warden's daughter, and becomes regenerated. Just on the eve of his parole, a squealer is murdered. Since Howard had been in the room and knew who the murderer was, he is questioned but refuses to talk; for this he is thrown into solitary confinement. The prisoner who had committed the murder finally confesses. At the same time, he kills the head keeper (Robert Barrat), against whom he had had a grudge; he is then killed by the guards. Miss Parker confesses to her father her love for Howard; he consents to their marriage once Howard is paroled.

The plot was adapted from the play by Martin Flavin; Fred Niblo, Jr., and Seton I. Miller wrote the screen play; John Brahm directed it, and Robert North produced it. In the cast are Arthur Hohl, Marjorie Main, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"The River"**

(Rel. by Paramount; running time, 31 min.)

This is a United States Documentary Film, produced by the Farm Security Administration, Department of Agriculture, and written and directed by Pare Lorentz.

Every American should be interested in seeing it. It is exciting, not only because of its subject matter—the history of the Mississippi River valley—but also because of the way in which it has been presented, with excellent commentary by Thomas Chalmers, and stirring musical accompaniment.

Mr. Chalmers employs simple terms to describe how the impoverishment of the valley was brought about by cotton planters, by timber interests who stripped the mountain ranges, and by recurring floods; but what he says is effective enough to touch one's heart and to fill one with a desire to do something about it.

He describes vividly the plight of the poor tenant farmers and share-croppers, who live in squalor and are helpless to better their conditions.

Although the purpose of this picture is to propagate the news about the Government's work in the Tennessee basin, where the experimental work in power dams and reforestation and adequate housing for the workers is going on, it has been produced so expertly, and the subject matter is so interesting, that one forgets it is propaganda.

Stacy Woodward, Floyd Crosby, and Willard VanDyke photographed it, and Virgil Thomson wrote the music. Suitable for all. Class A.

**"Bringing Up Baby" with Katharine  
Hepburn and Cary Grant**

(RKO [1936-37] February 18; time, 101 min.)

An excellent farce. The story is novel and has been treated so well that one is kept laughing from the beginning to the very end. There are many situations that provoke hearty laughter; but perhaps the most comical situation is at a night club, where Cary Grant, having accidentally stepped on Katherine Hepburn's gown, rips away part of the skirt, then trying to cover up the torn part in the back with his hat, thus annoying Miss Hepburn, who did not know that her dress had been torn. Grant, playing a semi-serious part, is the perfect foil for Miss Hepburn's clowning. And audiences, accustomed to seeing Miss Hepburn in serious parts, will be amazed at her capabilities as a

comedian. The romance is delightful; although one knows how it will end, one is kept in suspense because of the tricks Miss Hepburn resorts to in her effort to win over Grant:—

Grant, while on the golf course with the attorney for a wealthy woman who was contemplating endowing him with \$1,000,000 to continue research work at his museum, accidentally becomes acquainted with Miss Hepburn, a slightly scatter-brained girl. Before he knows what was happening, he finds himself becoming involved in the care of a tamed leopard that had been sent to Miss Hepburn by her brother; she wanted to hide the leopard at her country home, because she thought that her aunt (May Robson), if she would find out about the leopard, would not give her the million dollars she had promised her. It develops that the aunt was none other than the woman from whom Grant had expected to get his million dollars. Things go completely haywire when the tamed leopard, and at the same time a wild leopard from a zoo, escape; every one, including Miss Robson's friend (Charlie Ruggles), is arrested by Walter Catlett, the Sheriff, who mistakes them for members of a gang. When Miss Hepburn learns that Miss Robson had been expecting the leopard as a pet she is heartbroken and determines to find it. She manages to escape from jail, and soon returns with what she believed was the tame leopard; but when she sees her leopard in the jailhouse, she realizes she was dragging a wild leopard; then she becomes terrified. Grant finally tricks the wild leopard into a cell. The prisoners are released, and Grant goes back to his museum, minus the million dollars. His staid fiancée breaks their engagement. Miss Hepburn finally calls to see him and confesses that she loved him; he is happy, for he, too, loved her.

Hagar Wilde wrote the story, and Dudley Nichols and Hagar Wilde, the screen play; Howard Hawks directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Barry Fitzgerald, Fritz Feld, and others. (Class A.)

**"Gold Is Where You Find It" with  
George Brent, Olivia deHavilland  
and Claude Rains**

(First National, February 19; time, 94 min.)

A very good technicolor box-office attraction, despite a slow start. The first half is concentrated mostly on impressing the spectator with the gorgeous outdoor photography, which becomes somewhat monotonous because of repetitious shots of certain scenes. Once the action starts, however, one is less conscious of the striving for effects and becomes absorbed in the plot. The real thrills are in the closing scenes, where the hero, in order to protect the farmers, dynamites the miners' plant, causing a flood. The technicolor photography heightens the excitement in these scenes. There are some situations that stir the emotions. The situation in which the young son of the leading farmer is killed by the miners is one of them. The romance is simple but pleasing. The action takes place in the year 1870:—

When George Brent, engineer for a mining outfit, arrives in Sacramento to supervise the hydraulic work of digging for gold, he finds out that there was enmity between the miners and the farmers. The farmers, who lived in the lower valley, were being ruined by the miners, who worked in the upper valley, because the waste matter of the diggings was washed down the river, destroying their crops and even washing away some of the wooden shacks in which the farmers lived. Claude Rains, the most prosperous wheat grower, tries to keep the farmers from taking the law into their own hands; he insists that instead they start injunction proceedings. When he learns that Brent was in love with his daughter (Olivia deHavilland), he is angry and orders him off the premises, for he mistrusted any one connected with the miners. Brent, after a trip to San Francisco to see his superiors, returns to Sacramento and is shocked to learn that he had been replaced by brutal Barton MacLane, whose orders were to shoot the farmers if they tried to serve the injunction papers. When Rains' son, who had gone up to serve the papers, is killed, Rains gathers the farmers with the purpose of shooting it out with the miners. Brent, in order to prevent bloodshed, risks his life by dynamiting the hydraulic plant. Some of the men are drowned in the flood, but at least the conflict is over. The action finally comes to court, and the Judge finds in favor of the farmers. This brings joy to the farmers, for it meant that they could go ahead with their plans to make Sacramento a great farming center. Brent, who had turned farmer, marries Miss deHavilland.

Clements Ripley wrote the story, and Warren Duff and Robert Buckner, the screen play; Michael Curtiz directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are Margaret Lindsay, John Litel, Sidney Toler, and others. (Class A.)



### THE 35% PICTURES MUST GO!

*The Hollywood Reporter*, in its issue of Saturday, February 12, writes as follows under "Tradeviews":

"Everywhere you go in Hollywood you hear: 'I've never seen it so dead'; 'When are things going to pick up?'; 'Is this the start of a general knifing of all work and pay?'; 'What's going to happen next?'"

"All are questions bearing on the slowed condition of production, on the gradual pruning of all staffs, on attempted cuts in many new contracts, plus a general uncertainty of the whole layout."

"Production has slowed down to a walk, because studios, for the most part, are well ahead of their programs, in addition to the fact that the home office execs and their distributing heads have requested the present pace in an effort to 'take stock,' analyze present conditions, attempt to figure on the immediate future, and, ABOVE ALL, concentrate on the lowering of production costs to conform with the conditions of the ticket sales now and for some time to come."

"The reason there is more worry now on the part of the creators than in the past few years is because of the dizzy pace installed by all studios, born of a temporary box-office boom and an affluence that went to the heads of everyone from the top production head down to the slate boy."

"The ticket sales, the greatest the business has ever known, turned \$25,000 directors into those drawing picture checks for \$100,000 and more; took artists who were happy to collect \$500 and \$750 a week and sent them up into pay brackets exceeding two and three times that amount; permitted writers the largest weekly salaries they ever received and the greatest amount of time for their work. It was all heaven here in Hollywood. But there was a sudden box office jerk, even in the face of the greatest pictures this industry has turned out, and with that jolt, the companies felt the need of their present move. . . ."

If every Senator and every member of the House of Representatives should read this editorial of Mr. Wilkerson's there should be no trouble in convincing them that the way out of this Hollywood mess is the passage of the Neely-Pettengill Bill, because the outlawing of block-booking as well as of blind-selling will compel the producers to put every director, every star and every writer on his own merits. The raising of \$25,000 directors to the \$100,000 class, and of \$500 a week players to the \$2,000 and even \$3,000 class; the permitting of ordinary writers to spend weeks at a time at Palm Springs and at other resorts, mountain as well as sea, in an effort to get some inspiration to write the particular story that had been assigned to them, is made possible only because pictures are sold, not on merit, but on quantity, the result of the prevailing block-booking system. When the time comes for pictures to be sold on merit, it will not be necessary for the studio heads to declare a production holiday in order to find means by which production costs could be lowered; the box office will tell what each artist is worth. It is the unfailing barometer.

The impression you should receive from this expose of present conditions in Hollywood is the fact that Hollywood, in the mood it is now in, will pro-

duce pictures that are in keeping with such mood. No producer could expect from a \$25,000 director \$100,000 work, when he cuts the salary of such director to what he is worth to the box office; nor a \$500 player, \$3,000 worth of weekly work when he puts such player to the pay level he belongs. The same is true of writers. The producers have made many of these artists live in a fools' paradise, and it is hard for them to make these artists put out decent work when their salaries are cut. They don't want to know what has caused the reductions; all they know is that they are not receiving less now.

The question, however, now is this: when most of you signed contracts for the 1937-38 season's product, conditions were of the best since 1929. Naturally you agreed to pay prices commensurate with the quality of last season's product. How can you, then, pay those prices for product that is not coming up to the quality you were made to believe that you would receive?

A readjustment of the contracts all along the line is necessary. The 35% pictures must go.

### THE DRIVE AGAINST DOUBLE FEATURES AMONG THE PUBLIC

It is hardly possible for any one of us to know who is back of the move against double features, among the picture-going public. Certainly the movement in Chicago has not started spontaneously; some one must have primed it.

There is much that can be said against double features, and much for them. For instance, by showing double features, an exhibitor is compelled to show many pictures that are unsuitable for showing. But if it were not for the double features, the independent producers could not have survived. And without independent production, the industry would certainly have been monopolized more closely than it is today.

The cause for the double feature evil is the theatre-owning producers themselves. Being in control of theatres in the choicest locations, and being in a position to make deals among themselves and with the producers who do not own theatres, they deprive the independent exhibitor of an opportunity to show first run films. He is, therefore, compelled to show two features on the same bill, for one feature alone would not, in many instances, draw a corporal's guard in his theatre. Often even double features will not draw; he then finds it necessary to establish premium nights, which, in many instances, outdraw the finest feature pictures, with the most popular stars.

Such is the situation as concerns the exhibitor. On the independent producer's side, double features are a matter of life and death for his business, for the affiliated circuits, having, as said, a monopoly of exhibition, will not buy his pictures, or if they buy them they do not give him sufficient revenue to enable him to make a substantial number of his feature pictures suitable for single billing. Even when he now and then makes a meritorious picture, established as a money-maker beyond any doubt, they chisel him down to the point where he is not encouraged to make other such pictures.

The double-feature problem cannot be settled arbitrarily; it will have to be decided by each exhibitor himself, in accordance with his particular requirements.



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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1938

No. 9

## CAN THE CONTRACT HOLDERS COMPEL FIRST NATIONAL TO DELIVER "BOY MEETS GIRL"?

When First National started selling its product last summer, its contract form named three pictures either by title and stars or by stars alone: "Adventures of Robinhood" (251), with Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland; "Food for Scandal" (252), with Carole Lombard, Fernand Gravet, and Ethel Merman; and No. 253, described as a "Big Musical," with Dick Powell, Ginger Rogers, and Benny Goodman and his orchestra as the stars.

About the middle of August First National altered the contract form, putting "Boy Meets Girl," the Broadway success, in place of "Big Musical."

Holders of the second form of contract have now been notified that No. 253 has been given to "Hollywood Hotel," and that they must accept this picture instead of "Boy Meets Girl."

An exhibitor has written to this office asking whether he is or is not under an obligation to accept "Hollywood Hotel," instead of "Boy Meets Girl."

I looked into the contract and found that the rights of the distributor to make the substitution are contained in the Eighth Clause, which reads as follows:

"(a) 'The Distributor shall have and hereby reserves the right in the sole discretion of the Distributor to change the title of any of the said motion pictures, to make changes in, alterations and adaptation of any story, book or play and to substitute for any thereof any other story, book or play. The Distributor also shall have and hereby reserves the right to change the director, the cast or any member thereof of any of said motion pictures.

"(b) The Exhibitor shall not be required to accept for any feature motion picture described in this Schedule as that of a named star or stars, director or named well-known author, book or play, any motion picture or any other star or stars, director, author, book or play nor to accept any other feature motion picture in place of any thereof which in the Schedule is designated 'no substitute.' . . ."

In other words, the distributor has the right to give you any other picture he sees fit to deliver in place of the one it has sold you, unless the word "No Substitute" is contained near the title of the original picture; and since the phrase "No Substitute" is not contained in the space opposite No. 253, and described as a "Big Musical," First National is within its contractual

rights in taking away "Boy Meets Girl" from those of you who have it and in delivering "Hollywood Hotel" in its place.

What has prompted the Warner Bros. executives to make this substitution is, no doubt, the fact that they have decided to put in the leading part of "Boy Meets Girl" James Cagney, with whom they have made peace. They may hold "Boy Meets Girl" back, to release it in the 1938-39 season, as a sort of "come on" for that season.

In view of the fact that Warner Bros. is delivering "Emil Zola" in place of "The Gamblers," which was contained in the original form, those of you who bought both products may feel that the "swap" is even; it is only in the cases where an exhibitor bought only the First National product that injustice will be done.

What should, however, impress you is not the fairness of the "swap" but the fact that the contract contains the "joker" provision. The type the contract is printed in is so fine that I doubt whether one out of each hundred exhibitors has noticed it.

## INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION DESERVES YOUR SUPPORT

During the 1937-38 season, independent production, from the point of view of story treatment, direction, and star values, has shown noticeable progress. Several independent pictures are drawing well. The production of Republic pictures, are more costly, with more popular stars, better directed and acted than formerly, and the studio is striving for still better results. Monogram is so far superior to the old Monogram that there is really no comparison. During its first season in business, it has come forward with several money-makers. Grand National is the only discordant note. With prospects greater than those of any other independent company, it has fallen by the wayside, because of, what this paper believes, poor management. But Monogram and Republic have compensated for the poor performance of Grand National.

The independents have proved that they can make better pictures as pieces of work, and better money-makers as works of entertainment. But have you, the independent exhibitors, shown a proper spirit towards them? Have you given them the encouragement they deserve, in the only way possible—play-dates? Unfortunately, such does not seem to be the case. Many of you would rather buy the major "junk" at

(Continued on last page)



**"The Big Broadcast of 1938" with W. C. Fields, Martha Raye and Dorothy Lamour**  
(Paramount, March 4; time, 90 min.)

Good in box-office possibilities, but only fair in entertainment value. Despite a lavish production, popular players, and good tunes, it is slow-moving and dull in spots. The story is so thin that it falls to pieces. The picture is a hodge-podge of comedy and melody, the individual situations ranging from good to fair. W. C. Fields provokes laughter as usual. The funniest scene is where he plays golf, driving around the course in a peculiar looking motorcycle. Comical also is the situation where he plays pool with a silly Englishman. But with the exception of these two scenes, he is at a disadvantage, because of poor material. Martha Raye runs through the picture rather aimlessly and is given only one chance to sing and dance. The outstanding feature for class audiences is the singing of one aria by Kirsten Flagstad, the world famous operatic star, and the two songs sung by Tito Guizar. For the rest, Bob Hope, from the stage, makes a fairly good impression; Dorothy Lamour, appearing in a rather negative part, sings one song effectively, and the rest do the best they can with the material at hand.

The story revolves around a race between two ocean liners, one of which was owned by W. C. Fields. Leif Ericson, an officer on Fields' ship, is discouraged when Fields orders him not to use his new electrical invention, which could send up the speed and bring victory to their ship. Dorothy Lamour, a passenger, sympathizes with Ericson. Fields makes a nuisance of himself; he knocks out the Captain, and insists on steering the boat himself through the dangerous ice-berg vicinity. Ericson finally sets his electrical invention going. He is overjoyed when they win the race. Miss Lamour promises to marry him.

Frederick Hazlitt Brennan wrote the story, and Walter DeLeon, Francis Martin, and Ken England, the screen play; Mitchell Leisen directed it, and Harlan Thompson produced it. In the cast are Lynne Overman, Ben Blue, Grace Bradley, Patricia Wilder, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Romance in the Dark" with Gladys Swarthout, John Boles and John Barrymore**  
(Paramount, Feb. 18; time, 78 min.)

This comedy with music is entertainment primarily for class audiences, despite its attempts at light-hearted comedy, for it tends too much towards the operatic for mass appeal. It seems a pity that Paramount has not yet found a good story for Miss Swarthout, for she has charm, good looks, and a beautiful voice. Aside from singing, this gives her very little else to do but stand around and look pretty. The plot is silly and the action slow; the over-abundant music is dragged in by the ear. The action takes place in Budapest:—

At her music school graduation, Miss Swarthout is thrilled when John Boles, a famous singer, guest of honor, gives her a medal; she believes him when he tells her that if she ever visited Budapest she should look him up. When she finally goes to Budapest, her many attempts to see him are in vain; and so she becomes a maid in his home. Boles, who was having his troubles keeping his manager (John Barrymore) away from his latest love (Claire Dodd), thinks of a scheme to trick Barrymore, and keep him away from Miss Dodd. Having heard Miss Swarthout sing, he leads her to believe that he was interested in furthering her career. He gives her money to buy clothes and jewels and then takes her to his country estate, to which he lures Barrymore. He passes Miss Swarthout off as a Persian princess, and Barrymore is thrilled; he signs her to sing. When she learns why Boles had helped her, she is furious and refuses to believe that he had actually fallen in love with her. She goes to Budapest with Barrymore to start on her career. The house is completely sold out for the night of her debut. Everything goes well until a newspaper reporter finds out that she was a fake. She is cheered at the end of the first act. But during intermission the customers read the newspaper extra exposing her and return to their seats to boo her. The tenor refuses to go on, but Boles saves the day by taking over the tenor's part, thereby quieting the audience. At the end they cheer them both. Miss Swarthout forgives Boles.

The plot was adapted from a play by Herman Bahr; Frank Partos and Anne M. Chapin wrote the screen play; H. C. Potter directed it, and Harlan Thompson produced it. In the cast are Curt Bois, Fritz Feld, and others.

It is doubtful if children will understand the innuendos. Class A.

**"The Baroness and the Butler" with William Powell and Annabella**  
(20th Century-Fox, Feb. 18; time, 79 min.)

A sophisticated comedy-drama, lavishly produced, but suitable mostly for class audiences. Since the story lacks mass appeal, the picture will have to depend on William Powell's popularity to attract people to the theatre. There are several situations that provoke laughter; but occasionally the action is forced and somewhat slow-moving. Although Annabella is extremely good-looking and wears clothes well, she is handicapped by a thick accent, which at times makes her speech unintelligible:—

Powell, butler to the family of the Hungarian Prime Minister (Henry Stephenson), is a devoted servant, his family having served Stephenson's family for generations. He is secretly in love with the Prime Minister's daughter (Annabella), who was married to unfaithful Joseph Schildkraut. The family is completely surprised when on election night they learn that Powell had been elected to Parliament on the opposition ticket. Stephenson is amused at the idea, but his wife (Helen Westley) and his daughter are enraged. Annabella insists that her father discharge Powell, but he refuses. Powell soon assumes leadership of his party and, because of his duties, is compelled to neglect his butlering work; and so Stephenson reluctantly discharges him. Schildkraut, who wanted to advance himself politically, invites Powell to his home. Annabella entertains him; when Powell confesses his love for her she realizes that she, too, loved him. Schildkraut offers to divorce his wife without a scandal, provided Powell appointed him to a position of importance. Powell agrees to this; but Annabella publicly denounces her husband and insists that Powell himself be appointed to the position. The members of Parliament cheer her and follow her suggestion. She obtains her divorce and marries Powell, now a political power.

The plot was adapted from the play by Ladislav Bus-Fekete; Sam Hellman, Lamar Trotti, and Kathryn Scola wrote the screen play; Walter Lang directed it, and Raymond Griffith produced it. In the cast are Nigel Bruce, J. Edward Bromberg, Lynn Bari, and others.

Morally nothing wrong with it. Suitability, Class A.

**"To the Victor" with Will Fyffe, John Loder and Margaret Lockwood**

(Gaumont-British, March 1; time, 72 min.)

Judged solely on its merits, this is an outstanding English production. And as such, it should appeal to audiences that appreciate novelty of story, natural settings, and unusually fine performances. It is doubtful, however, if the American masses will give it the support it deserves, for the story is sombre and the Scottish accents pretty thick. And since the story is, in the main, about dogs, its appeal is further limited. It should please dog fanciers, however, who will be particularly thrilled by the situation in which the sheep trial for dogs is held. The outstanding performance is given by Will Fyffe, in the part of the inflexible Scottish sheep herder, whose unapproachable manner makes every one in the countryside his enemy. The romance is pleasant:

John Loder, a shepherd and a newcomer to the countryside, learns that his neighbor (Fyffe) is disliked by all. While on a visit to Fyffe's cottage, to remonstrate with him for setting his dog (Black Wull) on his sheep, Loder meets Fyffe's daughter (Margaret Lockwood) and falls in love with her. But Fyffe will have nothing to do with Loder, particularly after Loder's dog (Owd Bob) wins the sheep trials contest, thereby ruining Fyffe, who had bet all his money on his own dog. When Fyffe turns his daughter out because of her friendship with Loder, she seeks shelter with Loder, and in a short time they marry. In the meantime, many sheep are killed, and the herders feel certain that Black Wull was the killer. When they get their proof of this one night, they order Fyffe to shoot Black Wull, in accordance with the rules. Fyffe does this reluctantly for he loved the dog more than anything else in the world. Alone and destitute, Fyffe accepts his daughter's hospitality. He knows joy once more when, from the litter of a dog belonging to Loder, of which Black Wull was the father, he sees a pup that resembles Black Wull. Loder gives the pup to him.

Alfred Ollivant wrote the story, and J. B. Williams, the screen play; Robert Stevenson directed it. In the cast are Graham Moffatt, Moore Marriott, Wilfred Walter, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Class A.



### "Of Human Hearts" with James Stewart, Walter Huston and Beulah Bondi

(MGM, Feb. 11; time, 102 min.)

An excellent, heart-warming, human-interest drama, well acted and directed. It will, however, need exploiting to pull people in, because of the lack of box-office names. Once the spectators are in the theatre, however, there is no doubt that they will enjoy the picture. Nothing has been overlooked to give it realism; each player, down to the smallest character bit, fits his part to perfection. Primarily, it is a story of mother love and sacrifice; but with this is an interesting study of pioneering life before the Civil War, with all its hardships and bleakness. Particularly good is the first half, showing the development of the young son, played well by Gene Reynolds, making vivid the understanding that existed between him and his mother (Beulah Bondi), and his inability to live up to his father's strict demands. The father, a preacher (Walter Huston), although he loved his son, could not understand his romantic dreams. This conflict between him and his son is carried on until the father's death. In a way, the son (James Stewart), when grown, is not as appealing as in his youth for, in his eagerness to carve out a career for himself, he overlooks his mother, putting almost completely out of his mind the sacrifices she had made for him. The manner in which he is brought to his senses is stirring: Having obtained his medical degree, he enlisted as a surgeon in the Union Army, during the Civil War. He receives a letter from Washington, ordering him to see President Lincoln. The President at first speaks highly of his medical accomplishments, and then gradually brings up the subject of his mother, to whom Stewart had neglected to write for two years. The President informs him that his mother, thinking he had been killed in the war, had written to him, asking him to locate her son's grave. The President berates him for his neglect and orders him to write to his mother weekly. Stewart is ashamed of himself, and is heartbroken for having brought unhappiness to his mother. He uses his first leave of absence to rush back to see his mother; their reunion is a joyful one. (The romance between Stewart and Ann Rutherford is just hinted at.)

Honore Morrow wrote the story, and Bradbury Foote, the screen play; Clarence Brown directed it, and John W. Considine, Jr. produced it. In the cast are Guy Kibbee, Charles Coburn, John Carradine, and others.

Suitable for all. Class A.

### "A Yank at Oxford" with Robert Taylor, Maureen O'Sullivan and Lionel Barrymore

(MGM, Feb. 18; time, 102 min.)

Excellent. This comedy-drama of student life at Oxford College, produced by MGM in England, has mass appeal. The fact that it was made in England, with the supporting cast mostly English players, is all to the picture's benefit because the atmosphere becomes authentic. From the viewpoint of story, sound, photography, direction, and acting, it is as good as the best of American pictures. It has plentiful comedy, some of it of the uproarious type; a delightful romance, which is carried through in a natural manner; and human appeal, of the type to tug at one's heartstrings. And it has plentiful action, too, along the lines of sport events, with Taylor and other students participating in boat races, track races, and other sports:—

Taylor, all-around American college athlete, whose father (Lionel Barrymore) ran a small-town newspaper, is happy when his father informs him that he wanted him to complete his education at Oxford. At Oxford, he boasts of his athletic prowess, and the students, who thought his conduct vulgar, decide to play a trick on him by arranging for a false reception. This so angers him that he decides to quit Oxford. But his attendant's kindly advice makes him desist. His exuberance and skill in different sports soon win him many friends; and he falls in love with Maureen O'Sullivan, a fellow student. But he makes an enemy of her brother (Griffith Jones), who had been the ringleader in the tricks played on him. Miss O'Sullivan worries about an affair Jones was having with a married woman (Vivian Leigh), for, if he were caught, he would be expelled. One night Miss Leigh goes to Jones' room. Her husband follows her and, in the presence of the Dean, demands that the door be opened. Since Jones was not in, Miss Leigh did not know what to do. Taylor descends through the window of his room on the floor above to Jones' room and pulls her up to his room, where she is found. For this he is expelled. On the day he was to leave, his father arrives at the college. This makes him feel miserable. He tells him what had happened without involving Jones. But Barrymore realizes that his son was shielding some one and, calling on Miss

Leigh, appeals to her to help him clear Taylor. By placing the blame on one of the other students, who always wanted to be expelled, she brings about Taylor's reinstatement. Jones is so touched by Taylor's self-sacrifice, that he asks for his friendship. Barrymore and Miss O'Sullivan are thrilled watching Taylor stroke his crew to victory.

The plot was based on a story idea by John Monk Saunders; Malcolm Stuart Boylan, Walter Ferris, and George Oppenheimer wrote the screen play, Jack Conway directed it, and Michael Balcon produced it. In the cast are Edmund Gwenn, C. V. France, and others.

Class A.

### "Outside of Paradise" with Phil Regan and Penny Singleton

(Republic, Feb. 7; running time, 68 min.)

Average entertainment. The story is the routine one of romantic misunderstandings and eventual reconciliation, and it is developed without one new twist. The redeeming feature, as far as the masses are concerned, are the musical interpolations by Phil Regan, and the clowning by Bert Gordon, a newcomer to the screen, whose dialect and straight-faced delivery of comedy lines should prove amusing to most spectators. With the exception of the closing scenes, in which a chorus and specialty performers appear, the sets are not particularly lavish:—

Regan, leader of a jazz band, receives a cable notifying him that he had fallen heir to an estate in Ireland. Since he was broke, the members of his band contribute what they had in return for a share in the inheritance. With the collection, Regan goes to Ireland. When he arrives there, he is annoyed to learn that he was only a half owner of the estate, the other owner being Penny Singleton, member of an enemy clan, who was determined not to sell the castle. Regan, at the suggestion of a wealthy titled girl (Ruth Coleman), who had taken a fancy to him, opens up a hamburger stand in his half of the castle, and does well. The members of the band, hearing about the business, decide to go to Ireland to help their partner. Once there, they feel that if the castle were turned into a night club, they could make money. But not having the necessary money, they induce Miss Coleman to advance it for a share in the business. At first, Miss Singleton, who had fallen in love with Regan, approves of the night club idea; but when she learns that Miss Coleman's money was backing it, she is enraged, believing that Regan had lied to her when he told her his friends had invested the money. Eventually she is made to understand that Regan had been innocent of what had been going on; and so the lovers are reconciled.

Harry Sauber wrote the original screen play; John H. Auer directed it and Harry Sauber produced it. In the cast are Leonid Kinsky, Mary Forbes, Lionel Pape, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer"

(United Artists, Feb. 11; time, 90 min.)

Disappointing! Although it is entertainment primarily for children, the closing scenes, where Injun Joe chases Tom Sawyer through the cave, are so terrifying that most children should have nightmares after seeing it. And adults should for the most part be bored, for half the picture centers around the romantic actions of Tom Sawyer and Becky Thatcher. The sight of children acting coy and self-conscious in their attempt to imitate adults, as the girls do, somehow does not ring true. There are a few outstanding scenes. The situation where Tom sneaks into the house to see his Aunt Polly, who believed that he had drowned, and kisses her, stirs the emotions. And the scene where the three boys, who were believed to have drowned, watch their own funeral services, is fairly amusing. Except for the closing scenes, where Tom and Becky are lost in the cave and become frightened, the action moves along at a slow pace. There is some comedy, provoked by Tom's sissified brother Sidney, who takes delight in watching Aunt Polly slap Tom; also by the boyish pranks Tom plays.

Those who saw the Paramount version in 1930 will find that, except for a more lavish production, this is developed along the familiar lines of the story.

Tommy Kelly, the new find, plays the part of Tom Sawyer appealingly; Becky is played by Ann Gillis; Aunt Polly, by May Robson; Sidney, by David Holt; Huckleberry Finn, by Jackie Moran; Muff Potter, by Walter Brennan; Injun Joe, by Victor Jory; others in the cast are Charles Richman, Victor Kilian, Nana Bryant, and Margaret Hamilton.

Although it may frighten most children, there is nothing morally wrong with the picture; therefore, Class A.



high prices, than give living rentals to the independents.

Most affiliated circuits are finding all kinds of excuses to refrain from booking independent pictures; and whenever they book such pictures they hand the producers of them the crumbs from their tables. Consequently, the proper support must come from the independent exhibitors to enable them to continue improving their product.

Keeping the independent producer-distributors in business is not a matter that concerns the independent producer-distributors alone; it concerns also every independent exhibitor, for without independent production the major companies will have a completely monopoly of the business. And when such a condition is brought about, you will not be needed; your theatre can be operated by them just as well as it can by you.

The prosperity of the independent producer should be of as great concern to you as it is to the independent producer himself, for a prosperous independent producer will be the greatest incentive to a major producer for better pictures. Do you suppose that Samuel Goldwyn, for example, is not bothering his head to find out how Monogram, with its limited resources, has been able to accomplish in "Boy of the Streets" what he accomplished in "Dead End" with \$1,400,000? You may rest assured that he has given the matter deep thought, and there is no question in my mind that Mr. Goldwyn, if he should ever produce a similar picture, will try to outdo Monogram. That is how you, the independent exhibitors, will benefit: healthful competition makes for improvement.

Don't chisel down the independents. Give them what their pictures are worth. Don't pay big prices for the inferior product of the major companies and then try to make up your loss by taking it out of the independents.

### OHIO PLAY-DATE LAW DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The United States District Court for Southern Ohio declared the law against compulsory play-dating of pictures unconstitutional, on the ground that the law did not prohibit the exhibition of any picture, no matter how improper, in any day of the week. The exhibitors had propounded the argument that the law was necessary to enable each exhibitor to show suitable pictures on Sundays.

The opinion says partly: "It is claimed that the act is intended to allow the local distributor (exhibitor?) to make a proper choice of pictures for Saturday, Sunday and Holidays, when children attend the theatres in great numbers. But the statute contains no requirement as to the kind of pictures which shall be shown at these times or seasons. It establishes no standards of taste or morals to guide the local exhibitor in the exhibition of any film. The statute does not prohibit the exhibition of any film, no matter how improper, at any particular time or place, no matter how unsuitable. In fact this law would not prevent the showing of any entirely immoral picture. The Ohio Board of Cen-

sors is already clothed with ample authority to reject films which affect the public morals, but this statute in no way extends or touches upon that power of rejection. . . . We cannot assume that the local exhibitor would put aside pecuniary considerations in the interest of the public morals to any greatest extent than the wholesale distributor. . . ."

It took only great optimists to have had any hope that this statute would have been upheld by the courts.

But although the law has been declared unconstitutional, the efforts the exhibitors have exerted and the money they have spent in putting this law through the Ohio legislature have not been in vain, for in that opinion the court sets down certain principles that will prove of great value to them in future efforts to put an end to industry abuses by legislation. For instance, the distributors asserted that the public exhibition of motion pictures is not affected with a public interest and hence is not subject to regulation. The court said that this contention "carries no weight," and proceeds to prove it by citing the fact that the Ohio censorship law has been upheld by the U. S. Supreme Court, which stated: "We would have to shut our eyes to the facts of the world to regard the precaution unreasonable or the legislation to effect it a mere wanton interference with personal liberty."

In regard to the contention of the plaintiff that undue restriction is placed upon interstate commerce, the judge said: "No undue burden or restriction is placed upon interstate commerce by this statute. The statute concerns exhibitions in Ohio, and no authority needs to be cited to the effect that the exhibition of motion pictures in Ohio and the time and manner of their display is a purely local matter. . . ."

As to the plaintiff's contention that the law affected copyrights, the court said: "Neither does the act, if it be otherwise constitutional, place an invalid limitation upon copyrights."

Commenting on the Court's decision, Mr. Abram F. Myers, Counsel for Allied States Association, made the following observation:

"The court did not stop with deciding the case in favor of the distributors on the point mentioned, but expressly overruled all other points raised by the distributors against the constitutionality of the statute. In doing so, the court helped materially to clarify the law regarding the power of the States to regulate the motion picture business in a way which will be helpful to the exhibitors in other phases of the legislative campaign. . . ."

Further on, Mr. Myers says that part of the Court's opinion should prove helpful in upholding the North Dakota theatre-divorcement law, and that another part should prove of helpfulness with the pending appeal in the Interstate Amusement Company case. He then states:

"The respective spheres of the Federal and State governments has been further clarified and the distributors can no longer hide behind the protection of the former when the States undertake to impose valid regulations relating to the exhibition end of the business. . . ."



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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No. 10

### Box Office Performances of 1937-38 Season's Pictures—No. 1

This is the third series of articles giving the box office performances of 1937-38 season's pictures. The first series was printed beginning with the October 23 issue; the second, beginning with the December 18 issue.

#### Columbia

"All American Sweetheart," with Scott Colton and Patricia Farr, produced by Wallace MacDonald, and directed by Lambert Hillyer, from a screen play by Grace Neville, Fred Niblo, Jr., and Michael L. Simmons: Fair-Poor.

"I'll Take Romance," with Grace Moore, Melvyn Douglas, and Stuart Erwin, produced by Everett Riskin, and directed by Edward H. Griffith, from a screen play by George Oppenheimer and Jane Murfin: Good-Fair (some reports Poor).

"The Shadow," with Charles Quigley and Rita Hayworth, produced by Wallace MacDonald, and directed by C. C. Coleman, Jr., from a screen play by Arthur T. Hornman: Fair-Poor.

"Headin' East," with Buck Jones and Ruth Coleman, produced by L. G. Leonard, and directed by Ewing Scott, from a screen play by Ethel LaBlanche: Fair-Poor.

"Under Suspicion," with Jack Holt, Craig Reynolds, and Rosalind Keith, produced by Larry Darmour, and directed by Lewis D. Collins, from a screen play by Joseph Hoffman and Jefferson Parker: Fair-Poor.

"Outlaws of the Prairie," with Charles Starrett and Iris Meredith, directed by Sam Nelson, from a screen play by Ed Earl Repp: Fair.

"Women in Prison," with Wyn Cahoon and Scott Colton, produced by Wallace MacDonald, and directed by Lambert Hillyer, from a screen play by Saul Elkins: Fair.

"No Time to Marry," with Mary Astor and Richard Arlen, produced by Nat Perrin, and directed by Harry Lachman, from a screen play by Paul Jarrico: Fair.

"Penitentiary," with Walter Connolly, John Howard and Jean Parker, produced by Robert North, and directed by John Brahm, from a screen play by Fred Niblo, Jr., and Seton I. Miller: Fair.

"Squadron of Honor," with Don Terry and Mary Russell, directed by C. C. Coleman, Jr., from a screen play by Michael L. Simmons: Poor.

"Little Miss Roughneck," with Edith Fellows and Leo Carrillo, produced by Wallace MacDonald, and directed by Aubrey Scotto, from a screen play by Fred Niblo, Jr., Grace Neville and Michael L. Simmons: Fair.

"Cattle Raiders," with Charles Starrett and Iris Meredith, directed by Sam Nelson from a screen play by Joseph F. Poland and Ed Earl Repp: Fair.

Twenty-four pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 2; Good-Fair, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 8; Fair-Poor, 10; Poor, 1.

The first 24 of the 1936-37 season, excluding the westerns, were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 6; Poor, 6.

The comparison indicates that the box-office performances of this season's pictures are inferior to last season's.

#### First National

"The Patient in Room 18," with Patric Knowles and Ann Sheridan, produced by Bryan Foy, and directed by Bobby Connolly and Crane Wilbur, from a screen play by Robertson White and Eugene Solow: Fair.

"Hollywood Hotel," with Dick Powell, Rosemary Lane, Lola Lane, and Hugh Herbert, produced by Sam Bischoff, and directed by Busby Berkeley, from a screen play by Jerry Wald, Maurice Leo, and Richard Macauley: Good.

"The Daredevil Drivers," with Beverly Roberts and Dick Purcell, directed by B. Reeves Eason, from a screen play by Sherman Lowe: Fair.

"Gold Is Where You Find It," with George Brent, Olivia deHavilland, and Claude Rains, produced by Sam Bischoff, and directed by Michael Curtiz, from a screen play by Warren Duff and Robert Buckner: Excellent to Good.

Sixteen pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 1.

The first 16 pictures of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 2.

There has been an improvement so far this season.

#### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"Beg, Borrow or Steal," with Frank Morgan, Florence Rice and John Beal, produced by Frederick Stephani, and directed by William Thiele, from a screen play by Leonard Lee, Harry Ruskin, and Marion Parsonnet: Good-Fair.

"You're Only Young Once," with Lewis Stone, Fay Holden, Mickey Rooney and Cecilia Parker, directed by George B. Seitz, from a screen play by Kay Van Riper: Good.

"Rosalie," with Eleanor Powell, Nelson Eddy and Frank Morgan, produced by Wm. Anthony McGuire, and directed by W. S. Van Dyke, II, from a screen play by Mr. McGuire: Very Good-Good (a few Excellent).

"Bad Man of Brimstone," with Wallace Beery, Virginia Bruce and Dennis O'Keefe, produced by Harry Rapf, and directed by J. Walter Ruben, from a screen play by Cyril Hume and Richard Maibaum: Very Good-Good.

"Man Proof," with Myrna Loy, Franchot Tone, Rosalind Russell and Walter Pidgeon, produced by Louis D. Lighton, and directed by Richard Thorpe, from a screen play by Vincent Lawrence, Waldemar Young, and George Oppenheimer: Good-Fair.

"Love Is a Headache," with Franchot Tone and Gladys George, produced by Frederick Stephani, and directed by Richard Thorpe, from a screen play by Marion Parsonnet, Harry Ruskin, and William R. Lipman: Good-Fair.

"Mannequin," with Joan Crawford and Spencer Tracy, produced by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, and directed by Frank Borzage, from a screen play by Lawrence Hazard: Very Good-Good.

"Paradise For Three," with Robert Young, Florence Rice and Frank Morgan, produced by Sam Zimbalist, and directed by Edward Buzzell, from a screen play by George Oppenheimer and Harry Ruskin: Good-Fair.

(Continued on last page)



### **"The Wife of General Ling" with Griffith Jones, Inkijinoff and Adrienne Renn**

(Gaumont British, Feb. 1; time, 69 min.)

A moderately entertaining British-made program melodrama, with an appeal mostly to men. The picture has been cut poorly, and at times it seems disconnected; and the photography is, in spots, pretty bad. But these defects are, from the point of view of the American picture-goer, of minor importance, as compared to that of showing a white woman married to an oriental, even though it is brought out that the marriage was platonic, for American audiences are not, as a rule, in sympathy with such marriages. Aside from these points, those who like stories of intrigue and secret service work may enjoy this picture, even though the plot is developed in the routine manner. The closing scenes are fairly exciting. Shanghai is the background:—

Griffith, an Englishman connected with the British Intelligence Service, suspects that Inkijinoff, a Chinese philanthropist, had been supplying with arms a villainous war lord, who had been crushing the Chinese people. But all his efforts to get evidence to this effect are thwarted. Inkijinoff's white wife (Adrienne Renn), with whom Jones was in love, refuses to believe Jones' accusations. In the meantime, it develops that Inkijinoff was himself the murderous Chinese war lord, who had posed as the philanthropist so as to avoid detection. With the help of Miss Renn, who had finally found out about her husband, Jones manages to get into Inkijinoff's warehouse in which the guns were hidden; he is surprised there by the war lord. He orders Jones to call the Governor to tell him that again he had accused Inkijinoff unjustly; but Jones tells the Governor to send troops. Inkijinoff shoots Jones, who falls to the floor, presumably dead. But since he wore a bullet-proof vest, he remained unharmed. As soon as the troops arrive, Jones jumps to his feet, and rushes to save Miss Renn. Just as he enters her room, Inkijinoff, who, too, had gone there, falls dead from a bullet wound inflicted by a British soldier. This leaves the way clear for Jones and Miss Renn to marry.

Dorothy Hope and Peter Cheyney wrote the story, and Reginald Long, the scenario; Ladislav Vajda directed it.

The scenes showing the brutal war lord shooting human beings may make it unsuitable for children. Otherwise all right. Therefore, its suitability is Class A.

### **"A Slight Case of Murder" with Edward G. Robinson**

(First Nat'l., March 5; time, 84 min.)

This burlesqued gangster melodrama is one of the funniest comedies produced in a long time. For one thing, the story is different; for another, the action is both exciting and comical, holding one's attention throughout. The situations in which the bodies of four dead gangsters are made the butt of jokes are a little gruesome, but people will not be able to refrain from laughing at the reaction of Robinson and his henchmen when they find the bodies, and at what they do with them. The production is not particularly lavish; but that does not matter, for there are other things that make up for it—novelty of plot, comical dialogue, and fast action. Many laughs are provoked by a young orphan, who matches his toughness with Robinson's henchmen. A romance is worked into the plot; but that, too, is treated in a comical vein:—

With the repeal of prohibition, Robinson, big-time bootlegger, decides to go into legitimate business as a brewer. Never having tasted his own beer, he does not know that it was so bad that people could not drink it; and so, after four years of legitimate business, he is broke. In order to cut down expenses, he brings back from Paris his daughter (Jane Bryan), who had been studying at an expensive school. Together with his wife (Ruth Donnelly), daughter, and three henchmen (Edward Brophy, Harold Huber, and Allen Jenkins), he leaves for a vacation at Saratoga Springs. And, in accordance with his custom of taking along with him each summer one young boy from the orphan asylum where he had been reared, he chooses a tough youngster (Bobby Jordan). Upon arrival at their rented house, Jenkins finds in one of the bedrooms the bodies of four well-known gangsters. Robinson decides that they must have been four of the five gangsters who had held up a bank truck, stealing \$500,000 in cash; also that the fifth one had killed them, and taken the money. Robinson and his men decide to distribute the bodies, one each at the doorstep of four people they disliked the most. Upon

their return, the henchmen read that a reward of \$10,000 had been offered for each gangster, dead or alive. Realizing that Robinson needed the money, they decide, without consulting him, to bring back the bodies and then claim the reward. But many complications set in; for one thing, Bobby finds the bag with the money hidden under his bed. In order to obtain an extension of the mortgage on his brewery, Robinson makes use of the money to impress the bank officials. Then, when he finds out that the four bodies were in a closet in his house, he pretends that they were alive and dangerous, and induces his prospective son-in-law (Willard Parker) a state trooper, to shoot them through the door. By accident Parker shoots also the fifth one, who had been hiding in the house. Robinson returns the money; and Parker is considered a brave man for having killed the gangsters. Robinson, who had finally tasted his beer, learns what was wrong with his business, and chides his friends for not having told him about it.

The plot was adapted from the play by Damon Runyon and Howard Lindsay; Earl Baldwin and Joseph Schrank wrote the screen play, Lloyd Bacon directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are John Litel, Eric Stanley, Paul Harvey, Margaret Hamilton, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Class B.

### **"No Time To Marry" with Richard Arlen and Mary Astor**

(Columbia, Jan. 10; time, 64 min.)

A mildly amusing program comedy. It centers around two newspaper reporters (Richard Arlen and Mary Astor), whose efforts to get married are thwarted by the demands of their editor (Thurston Hall). Just when chances for their marriage look brightest, Hall sends them off on an errand to find two goats he had promised his young son for Christmas. Their mission leads them into some comical situations. While at the zoo, in search of goats, Lionel Stander, Arlen's friend, accidentally enters a bear's cage, and in an effort to escape opens the trap door to the lion's cage; this is one comical situation. Another is the scene at the police station, where they are held for disturbing the peace. A melodramatic twist is given by the efforts of a crooked bondsman (Jay Adler), to hold for ransom a young supposedly missing heiress (Virginia Dale), who had attached herself to Arlen's party without Arlen's realizing who she was. Miss Astor, realizing suddenly who the girl was, outwits Adler, thus winning a scoop for her paper, and a reward. They get the goats, receive their editor's blessing, and look forward to being married.

Paul Gallico wrote the story, and Paul Jarrico, the screen play; Harry Lachman directed it, and Nat Perrin produced it. Marjorie Gateson and Paul Hurst are in the cast. Suitability, Class A.

### **"Daredevil Drivers" with Beverly Roberts and Dick Purcell**

(First Nat'l., Feb. 12; time, 59 min.)

A routine program melodrama. Only in one situation does it thrill the spectator; that occurs when the heroine was driving a busload of children home from a picnic; while going down a sharp hill, she discovers that the brakes would not hold. Otherwise, the plot is trite:—

Dick Purcell, automobile racer, is disqualified for reckless driving on the track. While on his way to another track, he meets with an accident when a bus with faulty brakes crashes into his car; his racer, which was attached to the car, is smashed. He arrives in town, determined to punish the owner of the bus line in the nose; but he has to control his temper when he discovers that the owner is a woman (Beverly Roberts). Being without funds, he joins the rival bus company as a test driver; and, at the advice of the president (Donald Briggs), he institutes suit against Miss Roberts. Briggs' plan was to run Miss Roberts out of business by means of the lawsuit. But Purcell, who had fallen in love with her, at her request, drops the suit, and so he tells Briggs. Unknown to Purcell, Briggs proceeds with the suit and obtains a verdict against Miss Roberts on behalf of Purcell. But Purcell outwits him by filing a petition in bankruptcy against Miss Roberts and appointing himself Receiver. He races in order to get together enough money to put the company on its feet again. And he succeeds. Miss Roberts accepts his marriage proposal.

Charles R. Condon wrote the story, and Sherman Lowe, the screen play; B. Reeves Eason directed it. In the cast are Gloria Blondell, Gordon Oliver, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### "Love, Honor and Behave" with Wayne Morris and Priscilla Lane

(Warner Bros., Mar. 12; time, 70 min.)

Just fair. It is saved from mediocrity by the excellent performances of Wayne Morris and Priscilla Lane. The first half is boring because of the preachment it tries to put over. One never knows just what it is in favor of,—whether it is aggressiveness or humbleness that it considers a virtue. But whatever it is, the arguments are not sound enough to give conviction to either side. In the second half, when Morris and Miss Lane appear, things pick up. Most of the laughs are provoked by Miss Lane, whose breeziness, natural manner, and wisecracking charm one. The most amusing situation is the end, where Morris, who had realized that his meekness was offensive to his wife, asserts himself by giving her a good spanking.

The story tells of the conflict between Barbara O'Neill and her husband (Thomas Mitchell), caused by the manner in which Miss O'Neill was bringing up their son (played by Dickie Moore as a child). Miss O'Neill believed in good sportsmanship, in losing with a smile, while Mitchell believed in fighting and taking advantage of situations. When she finds Mitchell kissing their next-door neighbor (Mona Barrie), she again acts like a good sport. This infuriates Mitchell. Their dickering results in a divorce. And Miss Barrie, too, obtains a divorce from her husband (John Littel), leaving him to take care of the education of their daughter. The two children, when grown, meet and fall madly in love; and, on the spur of the moment, they marry. This makes Miss O'Neill miserable, for she had planned Morris' career as a doctor, which plans his marriage had naturally disrupted. Miss Lane, realizing that Wayne's mother was a bad influence for him, tries to instill in him the desire to fight, instead of losing gracefully. But things do not work out as she had planned, and so she is ready to leave him. Morris, taking his father's advice, refuses to permit her to leave his home, and, to her delight, gives her a good spanking; this brings about their reconciliation. He decides to start out on his career digging ditches, instead of taking a soft job.

Stephen Vincent Benet wrote the story, and Clements Ripley, Michel Jacoby, Robert Buckner, and Lawrence Kimble, the screen play; Stanley Logan directed it, and Lou Edelman produced it. In the cast are Dick Foran, Minor Watson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Little Miss Roughneck" with Edith Fellows and Leo Carrillo

(Columbia, Feb. 9; time, 62 min.)

Mild program fare. The story is ordinary and some of the characterizations unpleasant. Edith Fellows, as a spoiled child actress, and her mother (Margaret Irving) are the two most annoying—Edith, by her precociousness, and Miss Irving, by her silliness. The fact that Edith sings operatic arias is nothing to get excited about, considering that motion-picture goes to do not rush to hear the best singers of that type of music. Leo Carrillo is the only one with whom one is in sympathy. The typical mob scene ending, in which a gang tries to get to an innocent man they believed guilty, in order to lynch him, is sickening. The love interest is of slight importance:—

Scott Colton, a Hollywood agent, agrees to manage Edith, a child actress, because he had fallen in love with her older sister (Jacqueline Wells). But because of her mother's interference, he finds it difficult to place Edith. When he finally does get her a job as an extra, Miss Irving again interferes; this results in Edith's dismissal. When Edith overhears her mother suggesting to Colton that they use a kidnapping scare to get Edith's name in the newspapers, she decides to take matters into her own hands. She runs away, leaving a ransom note in her room. The mother thinks Colton had planned it, and he thinks she had arranged it, and so the police arrest them both. Edith rides on a freight train and lands in a small village; she seeks shelter in the hut where Carrillo lived with his wife and children. Learning to love them, she hates to leave when he finally insists on taking her back to the orphanage where she had pretended to have run away from. By a ruse, she leads Carrillo to believe their car was out of order and promises to wait until he could bring back a mechanic from the town. She gives him a ransom letter to mail, and he, not being able to read, does not know what it is about. He is caught mailing it and is arrested as the kidnapper. In the meantime, a policeman finds Edith and notifies her mother. When Edith hears that the mob was closing in on Carrillo,

she pleads with the police to rush her to the scene. She arrives in time to save Carrillo from harm, by informing the mob that it had all been a hoax. Because of the publicity, she finally wins the long-desired studio contract.

Fred Niblo, Jr., and Grace Neville wrote the story, and they and Michael L. Simmons, the screen play; Aubrey Scotto directed it and Wallace MacDonald produced it. Morally suitable for all. Class A.

### "Born to Be Wild" with Ralph Byrd, Doris Weston and Ward Bond

(Republic, Mar. 16; time, 66 min.)

Fair program entertainment, suitable for neighborhood theatres. The fact that the action takes place on the open road, with the hero at the wheel of a truck most of the time, may prove tiresome to some spectators. The story is developed along familiar lines; nevertheless, it holds one in suspense because of the constant danger to the hero and to his pal, who, in line with their duty as truck drivers, were conveying a truck-load of dynamite to a designated spot. The excitement is caused by the attempts of the villain, an unscrupulous ranch owner, and his henchmen to stop the delivery of the dynamite, which was to be used to blow up a dam, an act that was necessary to save the small ranch owners, who would otherwise be ruined. Comedy, romance, and a few songs are interpolated naturally. The romance is developed in a familiar manner, with quarrels and misunderstandings, for the hero believed the heroine to be in league with the villain. She had at first been in league with the villain, believing him to be honest and eager to save her father's ranch. But when she realized that the villain had tricked her, as well as the other ranch owners, she helps the hero to get the dynamite to the dam. They do this coasting the truck down hill and then jumping to safety, permitting the truck to smash into the dam and to explode the locks, thereby letting the water rush through. The villain and his henchmen are rounded up. Explanations follow; and the lovers are reconciled.

Nathanael West wrote the original screen play; Joe Kane directed it, and Harold Shumate produced it. In the cast are Robert Emmett Keane, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Suitability, Class A.

### "Walking Down Broadway" with Claire Trevor, Phyllis Brooks and Michael Whalen

(20th Century-Fox, Mar. 11; time, 68½ min.)

This drama, centering around the lives of six chorus girls during one year, is fair entertainment. Because of the theme, which is somewhat morbid, its appeal should be directed mostly to women; a drawback, as far as men are concerned, is the fact that the action revolves mostly around the women, and is slowed up by an over-abundance of dialogue. The light note is supplied by Dixie Dunbar, the silliest of the group, who disturbs her companions with her inane remarks.

The six girls—Miss Trevor, Miss Dunbar, Phyllis Brooks, Leah Ray, Lynn Bari, and Jayne Regan, at the close of the show in which they had appeared, sign a pledge to meet the following year. Miss Bari, who had just signed a Hollywood contract, seems the one destined for success; but that very night she is run down and killed by a truck. Miss Ray, divorced and mother of a child, craves excitement and accepts a position as a singer in a night club. She innocently becomes involved in a murder and is sentenced to life imprisonment. Miss Brooks, engaged to wealthy Michael Whalen, is unfaithful to him. When he finds out about her, calling off their engagement, she goes out to the balcony of her apartment and threatens to kill herself. She accidentally trips and falls to her death. Miss Trevor, who loved Whalen, helps him to get out of the apartment before the police arrived. Miss Regan, who loved Thomas Beck, a clerk in Whalen's office, is heart-broken when she learns that Beck had stolen money from his firm and was running away. Together with Miss Trevor, she goes to see Whalen to plead for Beck. But he is adamant. Miss Trevor, disgusted, first admits that she loved him, and then tells him what contempt she had for him. Realizing how stupid he had been, he helps Beck out of the mess, and then rushes after Miss Trevor, who had boarded a boat for Europe. They are happily reconciled. Miss Dunbar marries a silly old millionaire.

Robert Chapin and Karen DeWolf wrote the screen play, Norman Foster directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Jed Prouty and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Class B.



"Everybody Sing," with Allan Jones, Judy Garland and Fanny Brice, produced by Harry Rapp, and directed by Edwin L. Marin, from a screen play by Florence Ryerson and Edgar Allan Woolf: Good-Fair (some Very Good).

"Of Human Hearts," with Walter Huston, James Stewart, and Beulah Bondi, produced by John W. Considine, Jr., and directed by Clarence Brown, from a screen play by Bradbury Foote: Good.

Twenty-two pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Very Good-Good, 8; Good, 6; Good-Fair, 7; Fair, 1.

The first 22 pictures of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 8; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 3.

Though there has been no Excellent picture in this season's group, nor any of the Very Good grade, the number of Very Good-Good and of Good grade is so large that it more than offsets the "shortage." One may, therefore, consider that the performances of this season's pictures have been at least the same as last season's, if not better than those of last season.

### THE PRODUCERS WORRYING ABOUT THE NEELY-PETTENGILL BILL

The producers are beginning to express great concern about the Neely-Pettengill Bill; they are becoming apprehensive lest it will become a law during this session of Congress. And the best proof of it is the fact that they have appointed Pat Casey, a very capable man, to lead the fight against the Bill.

If they were to judge the effect that this Bill will have on their interests unimpassionately, they would realize that it is the best thing that could happen to them; it will save them millions of dollars a year in waste, which occurs now. No "crackaloo" will, then, be able to start a picture when the shooting script is only on his cuff, as is the case frequently now; the scenario will have to be complete in the main details before a unit producer starts shooting.

But even if the law were to harm their interests, no one else may be blamed excepting themselves, for they have refused consistently to institute reforms in the manner of selling their pictures. If anything, they are growing worse, for even those producers who gave the titles of a few of their pictures have decided, according to trade-press reports, to eliminate them altogether, identifying the pictures they will offer for sale only by numbers. The exhibitors feel that they are entitled to some relief from this pernicious practice, and when they can't get it from the producers themselves it is natural for them to try to get it through legislation.

It is time the producers realized that they cannot keep on doing things the way they have been doing. If they are not yet "ripe" for employing common sense in their relations with the buyers, that is just too bad. There is already talk about anti-chain legislation in Washington, to include theatres, not to mention other anti-monopolistic legislation, such as licensing corporations in order for them to have the right to engage in interstate business, the license to be withdrawn if they resorted to monopolistic practices. Legislation of this sort will prove more injurious to their interests than will voluntary reforms.

### CAN THE DOUBLE FEATURES BE REGULATED BY LAW?

Commenting on the statement of Barnet Hodes, Chicago's Corporation Counsel, to the effect that the City Council of the City of Chicago has the power to pass an ordinance prohibiting the moving picture theatres from showing two features on the same bill, on the ground that they cause loss of sleep to children, the *Chicago Daily News* of February 18 thus comments partly:

"If the city council can bar double features, what about the practice of many restaurants giving a second, third or fourth cup of coffee? Coffee is a stimulant and it frequently induces loss of sleep.

"And what about the double feature, the two-pants suit? Some of them are certainly hard on the eyes."

In another part of the editorial, the following comment is made: "For the city to attempt to regulate such a matter by ordinance is a silly, but nonetheless dangerous, abuse of police power."

Mr. Edward Golden, general sales manager of Monogram Pictures Corporation, attributes the agitation of the groups of women, in Chicago, to selfish interests. He states that these women are acting merely as "stooges" of these interests, whose object is to effect a monopoly, not only in production, but also in exhibition. He gives a history of the agitation against double features for many years, including the time the Code Authority was organized under the National Recovery Act, and observes partly as follows on the attempt of these groups to ban the showing of two features on the same bill:

"Why stop there? With an auspicious victory here, double-headed baseball games will soon be too much for them, particularly since they may keep husbands away from home too long. Football games during inclement weather are too conducive to pneumonia. Why not make them taboo? Swimming resorts may become a danger. Why should people spend so much time in the water, or expose themselves to sunburn? Two pair of pants to a suit seem like too much. Round trip railroad tickets may arouse their resentment. As a matter of fact, any legitimate means of stimulating business in any industry may prove objectionable to these women. We need not consider these fantastic analogies, for the extent of their demands will depend entirely upon what they accomplish in the film industry. Are we to permit them to use us as guinea pigs for the destruction, not only of our own enterprise, but who knows what next?"

In another part of his statement, Mr. Golden says:

"The elimination of double features will mean that no theatre in the United States will require more than three hundred pictures a year for a single feature policy. May I repeat the statement for the edification of those short sighted exhibitors who sanction the elimination of the double bill? *With a single feature policy, only 300 features will be required per year! What prices will be demanded for such product? What recourse will one have to such demands and who will make these demands?*"

The elimination of the double feature will, as said repeatedly in these columns, mean the elimination of the independent producer. And the elimination of the independent producer cannot by any stretch of the imagination prove beneficial to the independent exhibitor. Besides, how can those independent exhibitors who favor the abolition of the double feature demand of the major companies the right to make a living when they themselves seek to deprive the independent producers from making a living?

Either a law or a city ordinance designed to bar the showing of two feature pictures on the same bill will be as constitutional as the law to take away from the producers the right to designate play-dates. The efforts of exhibitors and the expenditure of money will, therefore, be wasted.

### LET THE NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATIONS TAKE A HAND IN THIS

Mr. Karl Thiesing, executive secretary of New York State Publishers Association, impressed by what this paper said editorially in the February 19 issue relative to institutional advertising, sent a special bulletin to the members of his organization, urging them to act on the recommendations of this paper.

"An institutional campaign for moving picture exhibitors and a specific recommendation that one month in the spring be set aside as 'Picture-Going period,'" he says in the special bulletin, "are urged in the February 19 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, a trade paper service for movie exhibitors.

"... this advice from HARRISON'S REPORTS, a reliable service which declares itself 'free from the influence of film advertising,' should be brought to the attention of exhibitors by newspaper advertising men."

After copying part of the editorial, Mr. Thiesing remarks: "Here is an opportunity for an enterprising advertising man to launch a 'Go-to-the-Movies' promotional campaign among his city's theatre men, backing up his sales talks with the words of HARRISON'S REPORTS."

The New York State Publishers Association should not be the only one that should follow Mr. Thiesing's suggestion; every publishers' association should do so.

HARRISON'S REPORTS recommends to the American Newspaper Publishers Association and to other similar associations that their representatives call on Mr. Will H. Hays to discuss the matter of institutional advertising and of a "Movie Month." In its opinion, conditions are ripe for such a movement and they should take some action at once.



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## The Neely-Pettengill Bill Will Not Harm the Independents

The major producers, having awakened to the realization that the Neely-Pettengill Bill may pass, have become alarmed and are spreading propaganda with a view to making the independent exhibitors believe that, if this Bill were enacted into a law, the independent producer will go out of business. And with the independent producer out of business, the independent exhibitors' interests would be hurt.

They say that it is impossible for any producer, who should attempt to sell pictures before they are completed, to comply with the provision that requires a producer to submit to the exhibitor, at the time of the sale, a synopsis consisting of no fewer than one thousand words, setting forth the main points of the story. The reason is that alterations of situations as well as of characterizations are often made, and frequently the plot itself is changed radically, during production. Consequently, he will be compelled to produce a picture before selling it, for only in this manner can he submit an accurate synopsis of the story. And without such a synopsis, he runs the risk of violating the penalty provisions of the law.

With the system of producing a picture before selling it, the producers will be compelled to sell one picture, or no more than a small group of pictures, at a time. Under such conditions, the position of the independent producer, they reason out, will be made precarious; he will eventually be driven out of business, for, according to them, no independent has enough funds available to produce pictures before selling them. And to sell them a few at a time will make the selling cost prohibitive.

Under the prevailing system, they say, the independent uses the contracts he obtains from the exhibitors as collateral security on loans. This enables him to carry on production. The income from the first pictures is used to repay the loans and to pay the cost of distribution; and with additional borrowings he is enabled to carry on production until he completes his entire program.

With the Neely-Pettengill Bill made in a law, he will have no exhibition contracts for use as collateral security. Consequently, he will be compelled to produce one picture, or two pictures at the most, at a time, and then sell them. But the cost of selling will be, as said, so prohibitive, that no independent producer will be able to stay in business, whereas the major companies, with plentiful funds at their disposal, will have things their own way.

To the innocent, this argument may sound logical but to those who have studied the matter deeply it sounds as if the sympathy they offer to the independent producer as well as to the exhibitor is like the famous wooden horse of the Trojan war: there is something inside the horse. What is it? Let us see:

The established independent producers today have enough available funds, obtained either from capital investments or from loans secured by mortgages on property they own, to enable them to complete at the beginning of the season as big a group of pictures as the major producers. Furthermore, since their overhead is infinitesimal as compared with the overhead of the major studios, they are able to produce pictures at much less cost than the major producers. Consequently, they will not be put out of business, and they will not be in an inferior position to the majors, so far as having completed pictures is concerned.

But admitting, for the sake of argument, that they may be placed in a slightly disadvantageous position, they will have one advantage that will far outweigh all disadvantages: they will have a free market, a market where their

pictures, if they are money-makers, will find available play-dates, whereas now, no matter how meritorious are their pictures, they have difficulty in getting play-dates: the affiliated circuits refuse to book them, and if they do book them, they pay very little for them; and since the independent exhibitors are compelled to buy their pictures from the major companies in blocks of fifty or sixty pictures, the available play-dates for the independent producers shrink still more.

With a market free for pictures of merit, people of brains and ability, who are now working for major studios, but who want their freedom, will not find it difficult to obtain funds for the production of single pictures, for they will be able to sell them, whereas now they cannot obtain funds, because the investors know that the market is closed to them.

And who will derive the greatest benefit from a free market? The independent exhibitor, of course! He will have a greater number of meritorious pictures at his disposal.

As to the argument that film rentals will double, and even treble, eventually crushing the independent exhibitor, allow me to make the following observation: Suppose the exhibitor could pick the best pictures out of the product of each producer without being compelled to buy any of the dead weight, would he be willing to pay twice, and even three times, as much money as he is paying now? Of course he would! With two and even three money-making pictures a week, instead of fewer than one, as is the case at present, he would be making so much money that he would be glad to pay more for his film.

An additional advantage to the independent exhibitor will be the following: With the Neely-Pettengill Bill a law, his money will be good money, whereas now it is no good, for no matter how much he offers he cannot buy the run of pictures he wants if the affiliated circuit wants the same run. Give the independent exhibitor an even break at buying pictures and he can hold his own against any competition from affiliated theatres. And that is exactly what the Neely-Pettengill Bill will do if it should become a law. And that is exactly why the theatre-owning producer wants to prevent it. Hence the propaganda against the Bill.

## LET THE PRODUCERS GO SLOW ON MAKING CARTOON FEATURES

According to an article in the *Hollywood Reporter* of February 19, the major producers, having been impressed by the unexpected great success "Snow White" is making at the box office, are looking around for material with a view also to producing cartoon features, in color. That article reports that Paramount is one of these majors; it is negotiating with Max Fleischer to produce a cartoon feature "that will fit both the child and the adult taste."

Just because "Snow White" has made a great success at the box office is no reason why other cartoon features will prove successful. The producers must remember that through many years Mr. Disney has built up a reputation that can hardly be equaled by any other cartoon picture creator. And without that reputation "Snow White" would not have proved as great a success.

When they are approached for a contract for a cartoon feature exhibitors should be careful. The appearance of a single swallow does not indicate that summer is here. Let the cartoon feature prove itself first.



**"Dangerous to Know" with Gail Patrick,  
Akim Tamiroff, Lloyd Nolan and  
Anna May Wong**

(Paramount, March 11; time, 69½ min.)

A fairly good program gangster melodrama. It is somewhat lurid; but, since the story is fairly interesting, it will probably satisfy those who enjoy pictures centering around racketeers. It is, however, strictly adult fare, because of the gangster's demoralizing actions, and of the implications of the relationship between the gangster and his Chinese hostess. The gangster pays for his misdeeds in the end, of course, but the manner in which this is brought about is not particularly satisfying. One is in sympathy with the hero, who is persecuted by the gangster for personal reasons:—

Akim Tamiroff, gangster-racketeer, covers up his crimes so cleverly that it is impossible for the law to get the evidence needed to prosecute him. Lloyd Nolan, police inspector, hoped to be able to send Tamiroff to prison some day. Tamiroff, having amassed a fortune, turns his eyes towards society. His Chinese hostess (Anna May Wong), who was his closest friend, warns him not to step out of his class. But when he meets Gail Patrick, of society, he forgets Miss Wong's advice and is determined to make her his wife. He sets out to do this, first, by framing her fiancé (Harvey Stephens), a bond salesman, and then by demanding that Miss Patrick marry him in return for his clearing Stephens. She warns him that she would make his life miserable, but this does not discourage him. On the night that he was to leave with Miss Patrick, Miss Wong tearfully pleads with him not to leave and, while he played the organ, she stabs herself. Tamiroff, who realized that he had lost his best friend, bends over her in tears. Just then Nolan enters and, finding Tamiroff with the knife in his hands, arrests him for the murder of Miss Wong. Stephens is cleared; he and Miss Patrick leave for their honeymoon, happy to be together.

Edgar Wallace wrote the story, and William R. Lipman and Horace McCoy, the screen play; Robert Florey directed it, and Edward T. Lowe produced it. In the cast are Anthony Quinn, Roscoe Karns, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Sally, Irene and Mary" with Alice Faye  
and Tony Martin**

(20th Century-Fox, Mar. 4; time, 84 min.)

Although this is just fair entertainment, it has good box-office possibilities because of the popularity of the players. The story creaks with age, following, with very few new twists, the formula back-stage musical. For mass appeal it has catchy tunes, good production values, and a few comical situations. Fred Allen, the famous radio star, Jimmy Durante, Gregory Ratoff, and Joan Davis handle the comedy competently. The fact that not everything they do or say is comical is not their fault, for at times they are up against some trite material. One chorus number, "The Minuet in Jazz," is peppy and novel; it should please well. The romance is developed in a familiar way:—

Sally (Alice Faye), Irene (Joan Davis), and Mary (Marjorie Weaver), three manicurists with ambitions to go on the stage, are happy when their chance finally comes. Their manager (Fred Allen) engages them for a musical show he was producing with money supplied him by Joyce Taylor (Louise Hovick). Joyce was backing it because she had fallen in love with Tommy Reynolds (Tony Martin), a singer, and wanted him to play the lead. While attending a rehearsal, she notices the naturalness with which Tommy sings his love songs to Sally; enraged, she demands that Sally be discharged. Tommy, in love with Sally, leaves, too; and so the show folds up. Just when things looked the bleakest, Mary is notified that she had inherited a boat. They all rush down to see it and decide it would be a good place in which to give shows; but, not having the money with which to repair it, they are again disconsolate. Tommy, by promising to marry Joyce, obtains \$25,000 from her to back the showboat, and Sally does the same thing with a Baron (Ratoff); each one was motivated by the same desire—to help the other. But the manager fixes matters up by having the Captain, during a stage number in which he was supposed to marry Sally and Tommy, actually marry them.

Karl Tunberg and Don Ettlinger wrote the story, and Harry Tugent and Jack Yellen, the screen play; William A. Seiter directed it, and Gene Markey produced it. In the cast are J. Edward Bromberg, Barnett Parker, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Hawaii Calls" with Bobby Breen**

(RKO, Mar. 11; time, 71 min.)

A moderately entertaining comedy-melodrama, with music. It should go over best with the Bobby Breen fans, who will enjoy his singing of several numbers, including native Hawaiian melodies. Bobby has improved considerably; his acting is not as stilted as it used to be, and his singing is without affectations. The story is simple but somewhat far-fetched, and up to the closing scenes the action is slow. It has some human appeal, as a result of the friendship and devotion between Bobby and his Hawaiian friend. The closing scenes, where Bobby foils the plans of crooks, are fairly exciting:—

Bobby and his pal (Pua Lani), stowaways on a boat bound from San Francisco to Hawaii, are found hiding in a lifeboat by Ned Sparks, member of the ship's orchestra. He takes the boys to his room and gives them food; but shortly thereafter they are found by the Captain, who promises to leave Pua in Hawaii, since his relatives lived there, but insists on Bobby's returning. When the boat docks, the two boys elude the officers, jump from the ship, and swim to shore, where they are cared for by Pua's relatives, who hide them from the police. Warren Hull, a United States Naval officer, who had first met Bobby on the boat, meets him again at a native feast and impresses upon him the error of his ways. Bobby, feeling like a fugitive from justice, decides to go back. While he was driven to town by the chauffeur of Hull's friend, he finds out that important Government papers had been stolen from Hull; from conversations he and Pua had overheard, carried on by strange men in a cave they had discovered, Bobby suddenly realizes that the chauffeur was one of the culprits. Bobby escapes from the car and rushes to Pua, with instructions to have Hull and the police follow him to the cave. And they arrive just in time, for the criminals were abducting him. The papers are recovered, and Bobby is honored for his bravery. Hull adopts him.

Don Blanding wrote the story, and Wanda Tuchock, the screen play; Edward F. Cline directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. In the cast are Irvin S. Cobb, Raymond Paige and orchestra, Gloria Holden, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Wide Open Faces" with Joe E. Brown  
and Jane Wyman**

(Columbia, Feb. 15; time, 66 min.)

A typical Joe E. Brown comedy; it should more than satisfy his fans. Again he is a sap, taken in by crooks, only to emerge victorious. He goes through all his tricks, provoking laughs by his innocence, which leads him into trouble and danger. The closing scenes provide thrills as well as comedy, for there Brown gives chase to the crooks, and captures them. Though the plot is far-fetched, it holds one's attention because of the comical developments. The routine love affair is pleasant:—

In the development of the plot, Brown, who had been partly instrumental in the capture of a notorious bank robber (Stanley Fields), becomes front-page news. Remembering that Fields wanted him to drive him to a deserted inn, Brown goes there to investigate things for himself. He is surprised by Jane Wyman and her aunt (Alison Skipworth), who had just arrived to live at the inn, which Miss Wyman had inherited. Brown falls in love with Miss Wyman, as she does with him. He helps her set the inn in order and sends customers her way. He does not realize that all the customers were gangsters and their molls, who had gone to the inn to search for the \$100,000 loot, which they believed Fields had hidden there. Lyda Roberti and Barbara Pepper, two molls, believing that Brown was in league with Fields and knew where the treasure was hidden, try to "worm" the information out of him. He is embarrassed when Miss Wyman finds Miss Roberti kissing him. Brown accidentally finds the money, but Alan Baxter, a gangster, and Miss Roberti take it away from him. They leave, with all the other gangsters on their trail. Brown, who was suspected of having aided the criminals, decides to clear himself by capturing them. After a hectic chase, he finally causes them to surrender. The money is returned to the police officials, and Brown receives \$25,000 in rewards for having captured the gangsters. He plans to marry Miss Wyman.

Richard Flourney wrote the story, and Earle Snell, Clarence Marks, and Joe Bigelow, the screen play; Kurt Neumann directed it, and David L. Loew produced it with Edward Gross as associate producer. In the cast are Berton Churchill, Lucien Littlefield, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### "When G Men Step In" with Don Terry, Robert Paige and Jacqueline Wells

(Columbia, March 24; time, 60 min.)

A fairly good program melodrama. Although the story is not novel, the action is fast; for that reason one's attention is held throughout. The only unpleasant feature is the fact that brother is pitted against brother—one being the racketeer (Don Terry) and the other the G-Man (Robert Paige). One is held in suspense because at first Paige does not know that Terry was the racketeer leader for whom he was looking; but when he eventually finds this out he does not let it interfere with his duties as a federal agent, thereby winning one's respect. The closing scenes, in which Terry's henchmen turn against him, are the most thrilling: having been informed by one of the racketeers, who wanted to become their leader, that Paige was Terry's brother, they are led to believe that Terry was double-crossing them in order to help his brother. Knowing that Terry had a fortune in his safe from the sale of fake bonds, they call to see him and surprise him just as he was preparing to leave the country. At the point of a gun, they force him to follow them to one of his offices where the gang had collected. To his dismay, he finds that they had made prisoner also, his brother, who had gone there to get evidence against Terry, and Jacqueline Wells, a young society girl, with whom Terry had fallen in love. Terry, realizing that it was the intention of his gang to kill all three, tries to bargain for his brother and Miss Wells. The police, as pre-arranged with Paige, arrive just as Terry is shot and killed by one of the gangsters; but they save Miss Wells and Paige. Miss Wells, who had fallen in love with Paige, consoles him.

Arthur T. Horman and Robert C. Bennett wrote the story, and Arthur T. Horman, the screen play; C. C. Coleman, Jr., directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Gene Morgan and others.

Unsuitable for children. Good for adults. Class B.

### "Mad About Music" with Deanna Durbin, Herbert Marshall and Arthur Treacher

(Universal, Feb. 27; time, 95 min.)

Excellent! The story is a grand combination of comedy and human interest, and is entertaining enough to stand on its own; but, coupled with the music and Deanna Durbin's singing, as well as her charming personality, it is outstanding. Miss Durbin receives excellent support from a capable cast, particularly Herbert Marshall and Arthur Treacher. Marshall is warm and sympathetic, winning the spectator's sympathy by his understanding of Miss Durbin's plight and by his willingness to help her. And Treacher, as Marshall's valet, provokes hearty laughter by his disgust at his master's paternal obligations. Particularly amusing is the boyish attachment Jackie Moran forms for Miss Durbin and his bashful attempts to become her friend. The outstanding feature is, of course, Miss Durbin, who is just as refreshing as ever:—

Miss Durbin, a pupil at a fashionable school in Switzerland, compelled to keep secret the fact that her mother (Gail Patrick) was a glamorous screen star, is envious of the letters the other girls received from their parents. She longed for a father, and since her own father was dead, she writes letters to herself from an imaginary father, supposedly an explorer. Taunted by one of her schoolmates, who did not believe the stories about the father, she pretends that her "father" was arriving and that she was going to the station to meet him; her intention was to spend an hour there, and return to the school with the story that her father had gone away again. But the pupils' following her to the station compels her to find a father. She picks on Marshall, who alights from the train, and by pretending that it was a Swiss custom to show a newcomer around she attaches herself to him. He is puzzled by her actions, until he gets from her the facts. He helps her out by continuing with the hoax—he visits the school and delights both teachers and pupils. On the day that he was to leave for Paris, Miss Durbin reads that her mother was visiting the Paris Exhibition. She follows him on the train, informing him that she was going to see her mother. Once in Paris, she rushes to the hotel, but is heartbroken when her mother's manager (William Frawley) asks her not to see her mother because her career would be ruined if her admirers found out that she had a daughter. Tearful and lonely, she goes to Marshall's apartment. He takes her to a motion picture theatre, where her mother's picture was playing. He recognizes her mother from a snapshot she had shown him. Believing that it was time they were reunited, he takes her to his mother. In the meantime, Miss Patrick, having found out that Frawley had sent her daughter away, is heartbroken and determined to end the secrecy of her parentage. Marshall arrives with Miss Durbin just at the moment when Miss Patrick was an-

nouncing to the press the fact that she had a daughter. There is a joyful reunion between mother and daughter. And a romance develops between Marshall and Miss Patrick, which brings happiness to Miss Durbin.

Marcella Burke and Frederick Kohner wrote the story, and Bruce Manning and Felix Jackson, the screen play; Norman Taurog directed it, and Joseph Pasternak produced it. In the cast are Helen Parrish, Marcia Mae Jones, Christian Rub, Nana Bryant, and others.

Suitable for all. Class A.

### "Hollywood Stadium Mystery" with Neil Hamilton and Evelyn Venable

(Republic, Feb. 21; time, 65 min.)

A pretty good program murder-mystery melodrama. Since the murderer's identity is not revealed until the end, and the motivation for the crimes is concealed cleverly, one's attention is held throughout. A note of comedy is injected into the story by the rivalry between Neil Hamilton, the district attorney, and Evelyn Venable, a writer of detective stories, who try to outwit each other in getting clues. The story is developed in an interesting way, with plentiful fast action, comedy, and romance:—

Just before the start of a major championship bout, the radio commentator (Jimmy Wallington) makes an announcement that he had just received word of the passing away of a famous fighter. In memory of the fighter, the lights are dimmed for a minute. When they are raised, the crowd is shocked to find that the contender for the title had been murdered. Miss Venable, a well known writer of detective stories, offers a solution; the police captain, feeling that she knew too much, arrests her as a suspect. But she is released when Hamilton, the District Attorney, arrives, for he had met her and could vouch for her. During the investigation, another man is killed. Miss Venable finally hits upon the solution, and realizes that Wallington was the murderer. Wallington abducts her and takes her to his apartment, where he forces her to write a note of confession involving herself as the murderer. Just as he was ready to kill her, Hamilton enters with the police. Hamilton, having become suspicious of Wallington, had followed him to his apartment, arriving there in the nick of time. With the case solved, they look forward to furthering their romance.

Stuart Palmer wrote the story, and he, Dorrell McGowan, and Stuart McGowan, the screen play; David Howard directed it, and Armand Schaefer produced it. In the cast are Barbara Pepper, Lucien Littlefield, Lynn Roberts, and others.

The murders make it unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "Merrily We Live" with Constance Bennett, Brian Aherne and Billie Burke

(MGM, March 4; time, 94 min.)

Very good. Although the plot is typical of the many farces that have been produced, centering around an irresponsible family, this takes on freshness by virtue of excellent performances and of comical dialogue. The beginning is a little slow; but it picks up as it goes along, with excellent results. The best dialogue falls to Billie Burke; she tops all her previous performances. Her part is completely nonsensical; as the scatter-brained mother, she is bereft of common sense so completely that most of the things she says provoke hearty laughter. Although the others in the family—the father (Clarence Kolb), the older daughter (Constance Bennett), the younger daughter (Bonita Granville), and the son (Tom Brown), are more on the sane side, they, too, are up to pranks that are extremely comical. And to add to the turbulence, Alan Mowbray, the butler, and Patsy Kelly, the cook, are not much better than the family. The one really sensible person is Brian Aherne, a writer, who, because of his shabby appearance, had been mistaken by Miss Burke for a tramp; and since her greatest weakness was to save the souls of tramps, when Aherne had knocked on the door for permission to use her telephone, she insisted that he accept employment as her chauffeur. Aherne, having seen Miss Bennett, decides to keep up the hoax so as to be near her. Many comical situations arise by reason of his presence in the house. Under his influence, every one changes for the better. He and Miss Bennett fall in love with each other. The picture ends with a riotous slapstick scene, in which Aherne, who was supposed to have been killed in an automobile accident, returns to the household, thereby causing every one to faint. He finally convinces them that he was alive. Miss Bennett rushes into his arms.

Eddie Moran and Jack Jevne wrote the screen play, Norman Z. McLeod directed it, and Milton H. Bren produced it. In the cast are Marjorie Rambeau, Ann Dvorak, Willie Best, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



## Box Office Performances of 1937-38 Season's Pictures—No. 2

### Paramount

"Daughter of Shanghai," with Anna May Wong, directed by Robert Florey, from a screen play by Gladys Unger and Garnett Weston: Fair.

"True Confession," with Carole Lombard and Fred MacMurray, produced by Albert Lewin, and directed by Wesley Ruggles, from a screen play by Claude Binyon: Good.

"Wells Fargo," with Joel McCrea, Frances Dee, and Bob Burns, produced and directed by Frank Lloyd, from a screen play by Paul Schofield, Gerald Geraghty, and Fredrick Jackson: Excellent-Very Good.

"Bulldog Drummond's Revenge," with John Barrymore, John Howard, and Louise Campbell, directed by Louis King, from a screen play by Edward T. Lowe: Fair.

"Every Day's a Holiday," with Mae West, Edmund Lowe, and Lloyd Nolan, produced by Emanuel Cohen, and directed by A. Edward Sutherland, from a screen play by Mae West: Good-Fair. (Some, Poor.)

("Thrill of a Lifetime," already reported in the issue of December 25, 1937, as Poor. Release order in schedule altered.)

"Partners of the Plains," with William Boyd and Gwen Gaze, produced by Harry Sherman, and directed by Lesley Selander, from a screen play by Harrison Jacobs: Good-Fair.

"The Buccaneer," with Fredric March, Margot Grahame, and Akim Tamiroff, produced and directed by Cecil B. DeMille, from a screen play by Edwin Justus Mayer, Harold Lamb, and C. Gardner Sullivan: Excellent-Good.

"Scandal Street," with Lew Ayres and Louise Campbell, directed by James Hogan, from a screen play by Bertram Millhauser and Eddie Welch: Fair.

Thirty-two pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings, including the Westerns, from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Very Good-Fair, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 5; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 3.

The first 32 pictures of the 1936-37 season, excluding Westerns, were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 5; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 10; Poor, 2.

If we were to exclude the Westerns from this season's check up, the number of pictures on which box-office reports have been obtained is 27, rated as follows:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Very Good-Fair, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 8; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 3.

The first 27 of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 4; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 10; Poor, 1.

It seems as if the box office power of this season's pictures are considerably lower than last season's.

### RKO

"Danger Patrol," with John Beal, Sally Eilers and Harry Carey, produced by Maury Cohen, and directed by Lew Landers, from a screen play by Sy Bartlett: Fair-Poor.

"Quick Money," with Fred Stone, produced by Maury Cohen, and directed by Edward Killy, from a screen play by Arthur T. Horman, Franklin Coen, and Bert Granet: Fair-Poor.

"Hitting a New High," with Lily Pons, Jack Oakie and John Howard, produced by Jesse L. Lasky, and directed by Raoul Walsh, from a screen play by Gertrude Purcell and John Twist: Good-Fair.

"Wise Girl," with Miriam Hopkins, Ray Milland and Walter Abel, produced by Edward Kaufman, and directed by Leigh Jason, from a screen play by Allan Scott: Good-Fair.

"She's Got Everything," with Gene Raymond, Ann Southern, Helen Broderick and Victor Moore, produced by Albert Lewis, and directed by Joseph Santley, from a screen play by Harry Segall and Maxwell Shane: Fair.

"Crashing Hollywood," with Lee Tracy, Joan Woodbury and Richard Lane, produced by Cliff Reid, and directed by Lew Landers, from a screen play by Paul Yawitz and Gladys Atwater: Fair-Poor.

"Everybody's Doing It," with Sally Eilers and Preston Foster, produced by William Sistrom, and directed by Christy Cabanne, from a screen play by Jay R. Brn, Edmund Joseph, and Harry Segall: Fair-Poor.

"The Rat," with Ruth Chatterton, Anton Walbrook and Rene Ray, produced by Herbert Wilcox, and directed by Jack Raymond, from a play by Ivor Novello and Constance Collier: Fair-Poor.

"Double Danger," with Preston Foster and Whitney Bourne, produced by Maury Cohen, and directed by Lew Landers, from a screen play by Arthur T. Horman and J. Robert Bren: Fair-Poor.

"Radio City Revels," with Jack Oakie, Bob Burns, Milton Berle, Victor Moore and Ann Miller, produced by Edward Kaufman, and directed by Ben Stollhoff, from a screen play by Matt Brooke, Eddie Davis, Anthony Veiller, and Mortimer Offner: Good-Fair.

"Night Spot," with Parkyakarkus, Allan Lane, and Joan Woodbury, produced by Robert Sisk, and directed by Christy Cabanne, from a screen play by Lionel Houser: Fair-Poor.

Twenty-three pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 10; Poor, 2.

The first 23 pictures of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 4.

### UNITED ARTISTS CORPORATION

729 Seventh Avenue

New York, N. Y.

March 3rd, 1938.

Mr. Pete Harrison,  
HARRISON'S REPORTS,  
1270 Sixth Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.  
Dear Pete:

When we were discussing your review on TOM SAWYER, I mentioned the fact that we were opening the picture in Scranton, Pa., and Denver.

For your information, I think you would like to know that in Scranton we took in \$2,235.00 on Saturday at the Strand Theatre. The picture will show a new attendance record at that theatre for the past year.

In Denver it opened on Tuesday at the Denver Theatre and beat NOTHING SACRED, A STAR IS BORN and THE PRISONER OF ZENDA, other sensational Selznick hits, on the opening day by more than \$500.00 and on the second day was better than opening day.

As you know, the reviews all over the country were sensational. Fidler gave it five bells, the *Daily News* four stars, and wherever they have a star rating, or any other rating of that kind, it got tops.

The picture is now playing the Sparks Circuit in Florida to 145% of normal; at the Sheridan Theatre in Miami to 135% of normal.

I thought you would like to have this information since, when we talked about this picture, you said you were always open to conviction.

Kind regards.

Sincerely,  
MONROE W. GREENTHAL.

### WAR AGAINST DOUBLE FEATURES IN CHICAGO ABANDONED

On February 28, the Board of Aldermen of Chicago held a hearing on the complaint against double features, with a view to determining whether an ordinance prohibiting them in the city of Chicago should or should not be passed, but for some reason the proponents of the measure refused to take the floor to speak. As a result, the hearing was dismissed, without any action taken.

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Vol. XX

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1938

No. 12

## An Answer to the Producer Attack of the Neely Bill

As said in last week's issue, the major producers have become alarmed at the possibility of seeing the Neely-Pettengill Bill become a law and have started a campaign with the view of making you, the independent exhibitors, believe that, if this Bill should become a law, you will be put out of business. Through their Association, they have released a pamphlet setting down their reasons for their belief that this Bill would bring about such a result.

An effective answer is given by Mr. Abram F. Myers, Chief counsel of Allied States Association, by a statement he issued on March 9. Let me only add that the Bill is no longer in the hands of the independent exhibitors; it is in the hands of the civic, fraternal and religious organizations, which have become interested in it as a result of exhibitor pleadings.

The following is Mr. Myers' answer:

### "NEELY BILL HYSTERICS

"Allied leaders have not joined in the debate on the Neely-Pettengill Anti-Compulsory Block-booking and Blind-selling Bill this year because there were so many other matters calling for attention and because it was thought that all of the charges made against the bill during the debate two years ago had been fully answered.

"However, the reporting of the bill by unanimous action of the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce and the wide popular support being given the measure have thrown the opponents of the bill into a panic and the trade press and the mails are flooded with name-calling and highly hysterical articles and statements deliberately calculated to cause terror in independent exhibitor ranks.

"Some of these statements are by men whose ability has captured the admiration of the undersigned and who are quite capable of presenting their side of the controversy without resort to abuse or misstatement. That they have abandoned the traditional methods of honorable opponents and are deliberately misrepresenting the provisions and effect of the bill and the motives of those who honestly believe in the measure is a sure indication of the strength the bill has mustered.

"The ghost that has been conjured up to frighten little children is that the bill, if enacted, will compel (or result in) the selling of finished pictures one at a time. It would be a strange thing if this requirement were found in the bill because it was drawn with great care to avoid any such result. Copies of the bill have been sent to all Allied regional associations and we ask that all leaders read it again and see if they can find in it any suggestion that exhibitors may not buy as many pictures at a time from any distributor as he sees fit to purchase. If they do not find any such suggestion they are requested to so inform their members so that they will not be misled by the storm of misrepresentation and vituperation that is raging about them.

"Some of the spokesmen for the Hays group, recognizing this weakness in their position, go on to say that the single selling of finished pictures will inevitably result from the enactment of the bill even though there is no such requirement contained therein. This is a result which they deplore and which they say will be ruinous to the industry, but, apparently they are willing to go beyond the reasonable requirements of the law to bring it about. Why?

"The contention is that because the bill requires that the distributors furnish a synopsis of each picture offered, they will not assume the risk that the delivered pictures will conform to the synopsis. This must be a very grave risk to frighten these industrial titans to the point where they will

destroy the industry in order to avoid it. But if we look at the bill we find that a penalty is imposed for violation of Section 4 (synopsis provision) only for (a) failure to furnish a synopsis or (b) *knowingly* making a false statement therein. Can it be that the great motion picture industry can not survive under a system which would require it to tell its customers what it proposes to deliver without resorting to statements that are knowingly false?

### "FALSE ADVERTISING AND SUBSTITUTION

"Now since the question of motive has been raised, is it not in order to inquire what the Haysites are seeking to protect by their opposition to the bill? The manifest purpose of the bill is not to censor pictures or to hamstring the producers in making pictures. It is merely to afford a right of selection to independent exhibitors and the theatre-going public. Eliminating the public for the time being and speaking bluntly, it is to confer on independent exhibitors at least some of the advantages which the great chains enjoy under their selective contracts. It is a curious thing that opponents of the bill never mention the explanatory sentence at the bottom of Section 4 which describes the scope and purpose of the provision—

It is the purpose of this section to make available to the exhibitor sufficient information concerning the contents of the film and the manner of treatment to enable him to determine whether he desires to select the film for exhibition and later to determine whether the film is fairly described by the synopsis.

"All exhibitors are familiar with the gradual elimination from the exhibition contracts used by the distributors of provisions under which an exhibitor could claim a substitution. Thus under the standard contract now in use, the distributor can deliver any picture he chooses—or none. The lurid announcement books and work sheets are not binding on the distributor. The exhibitor must sign up for such pictures as the distributor sees fit to release regardless of his advertising and the oral representations of the film salesman. On several occasions during the past three years particular distributors have flagrantly disregarded their promises on the strength of which they solicited and obtained contracts.

"That the distributors are seeking to perpetuate this highly unethical practice is evidenced by the following excerpt from a recent issue of *Box Office*:

### "NUMBERS, NO STARS, NO TITLES

New York—Major companies next season will hold to the policy of selling by numbers, either as production numbers or in groups and again eliminate the star and title system, it is learned by *Box Office*. Certain companies now sell the entire season's line-up with a list of production numbers, while others stick to a plan of offering groups of 48, 52 or 50, whatever the bulk output may be for their respective organizations.

Contracts will provide for all pictures to be distributed within releasing seasons. Some companies begin distributing new product in August and others in September.

"Another provision which the Hays spokesmen carefully shield from exhibitor eyes in their tirades against the Neely Bill is also found in Section 4. This provision is much too attractive to the long suffering exhibitors to even risk

(Continued on last page)



### **"The Maid's Night Out" with Allan Lane and Joan Fontaine**

(RKO, March 4; time, 64 min.)

A mild program comedy. The story is far-fetched, and the comedy situations forced. It may, however, go over in neighborhood theatres because of the fast action in the closing scenes. A few situations provoke laughter, but there are not enough of them to bolster up a weak story. The players try hard enough, but they are up against trite material, which puts them at a disadvantage. Although the romance is developed in a familiar way, it is pleasant:—

Allan Lane, who wanted to go in for the study of fish, cannot obtain his father's financial aid because his father wanted him to go into his dairy business. Lane makes a bet with his father, the understanding being that if he would work one month on the milk route without missing a day, he would be allowed to use his father's yacht to go to the South Sea Islands to continue his fish studies. While on his route, he meets Joan Fontaine and, since she was wearing a dust cap and was cleaning a coat, he mistakes her for the maid and makes an appointment with her. After a few meetings, they fall in love. Lane's father is enraged when he learns that his son was in love with a maid, while Miss Fontaine's mother (Hedda Hopper) is heartbroken that her daughter should be in love with a milkman. Lane and Miss Fontaine meet at a charity affair, to which they had each gone with a different partner; each one accuses the other of having lied about their social position. Lane gets into a fight and lands in jail. His pal sneaks into Miss Fontaine's room and tells her that, unless Lane continued his route one more morning, he would lose his bet. She dons Lane's milk-driving clothes and delivers the milk for him; and when he obtains his release from jail he joins her on the route. And so he wins his bet and a bride. Both his father and Miss Fontaine's mother are happy when they realize the match was a good one.

Willoughby Speyers wrote the story, and Bert Granet, the screen play; Ben Holmes directed it, and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are Billy Gilbert, Hilda Vaughn, Wm. Brisbane, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Class A.

### **"Prison Nurse" with Marian Marsh and Herbert Wilcoxon**

(Republic, March 1; time, 67 min.)

This prison melodrama shapes up as fairly good program entertainment. There is an undercurrent of excitement from the very beginning, for it is established almost immediately that it was the intention of a few of the convicts to make a jail break. Although the methods they employ to accomplish this break are pretty far-fetched, one is held in suspense, because of the danger to the hero, another convict, who had been forced to accompany the jail-breakers. The occasional wisecracks by one of the nurses help to relieve the tension. One is in sympathy with the hero, who had been convicted for a mercy death. Consequently, his eventual freedom pleases one:—

Marian Marsh, Bernadene Hayes, and Minerva Uercal, three nurses, arrive at a men's prison to assist the doctor. A typhoid epidemic had broken out as a result of flood conditions. Miss Marsh meets Henry Wilcoxon, one of the prisoners, and recognizes him as a well-known surgeon who had been convicted and sent to prison because of a mercy killing. She appeals to him to help them out and, although at first he refuses, he succumbs, particularly after learning that the prison doctor himself had been stricken. He and Miss Marsh fall in love. This gives him new hope. The day before his parole was to be taken up before the Board, Wilcoxon, at the point of a gun, is forced to join Ben Welden, a dangerous criminal, and two other convicts in a jailbreak; they drive away in a prison ambulance. When Wilcoxon gets the upper hand and threatens to kill them unless they returned to the prison, Welden purposely crashes the ambulance. He dies; the only other witness to Wilcoxon's innocence is killed by a trooper. Wilcoxon is sent back to prison and re-tried on a murder charge, one of the guards having been killed in the escape. He is convicted for first degree murder. At the last minute, Miss Marsh finds the diary of one of the escaped prisoners. The details of the jailbreak in the diary clear Wilcoxon. This wins the parole for him. He and Miss Marsh look forward to a new life.

Adele B. Buffington wrote the story, and Earl Felton and Sidney Salkow, the screen play; James Cruze directed it, and Herman Schlom produced it. In the cast are Ray Mayer, John Arledge, Addison Richards, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

### **"He Couldn't Say No" with Frank McHugh and Jane Wyman**

(Warner Bros., March 19; time, 57 min.)

A mildly diverting program comedy. The story, based on the familiar theme of the meek, harassed hero who eventually rebels, is trite, offering just slight entertainment. For the most part, it is extremely silly and, considering the lack of star names, it will probably make a weak showing at the box-office. Frank McHugh does the best he can in the role of the timorous clerk, ruled by his fiancée (Jane Wyman) and by her overbearing mother (Cora Witherspoon). The one comical situation is that in which McHugh, against the wishes of Miss Wyman and her mother, bids for and obtains a large statue of a girl called "Courage." He wanted the statue because it resembled a society girl (Diana Lewis), whom he had worshipped from afar, never having met her. It develops that Miss Lewis had actually been the model for the statue. This brings about many complications, for her father (Berton Churchill), fearing that, if it became known that his daughter had been the model for the statue, his political career would be ruined, makes many attempts to buy it from McHugh, who steadfastly refuses to sell it, much to Miss Lewis' delight. Eventually McHugh does sell it to an art institution for \$5,000, making a profit of \$4,900 for himself. And he had also to outwit some gangsters, who wanted to steal it. His wealth gives him courage to denounce Miss Wyman and her mother, and to demand a large increase in his salary. And to his joy, Miss Lewis promises to marry him.

Joseph Shrank wrote the story, and he, Robertson White, and Ben Grauman Cohn, the screen play; Lou Seiler directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Raymond Hatton, Tom Kennedy, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Suitability, Class A.

### **"Arsene Lupin Returns" with Melvyn Douglas, Virginia Bruce and Warren William**

(MGM, February 25; running time, 80 min.)

This crook melodrama offers entertainment for both the masses and class audiences. Good performances, an interesting story, and fast action, are the predominant features; and, incidentally, they cover up a few implausible situations. The classes may enjoy it because the leading characters are suave, talking and acting in an intelligent manner. One is held in suspense throughout, out of the knowledge that the hero, a reformed crook, was in danger of becoming involved in a robber and murder he did not commit. Comedy is provoked by the way in which the hero and a clever detective outwit each other. The romance is pleasant:—

Warren William, a private detective, engaged by John Halliday, a titled Frenchman, to guard the valuable emerald necklace he was taking back to France, sails with Halliday and his niece (Virginia Bruce). In France, he meets Miss Bruce's fiancée (Melvyn Douglas), a country gentleman. One night, the necklace is stolen; upon examination William finds the name "Arsene Lupin" written across the safe. Every one is surprised, for "Lupin" was supposed to have been killed by the police long before. Without telling the police anything about his suspicions, William starts an investigation into Douglas' past and finds that he is "Arsene Lupin." But Douglas, who had gone straight and knew that some one else was using his former name to throw suspicion on the wrong person, does some investigating himself, particularly since he knew that William was aware of his identity and had been trying to pin the guilt on him. Douglas learns the identity of the diamond cutter to whom the necklace had been taken and, together with his two former accomplices, he goes there. Although they find the diamond cutter murdered, they continue with their search, until they find the necklace, and send it back to Halliday by messenger. This puzzles the police, but not William. Eventually he and Douglas, working together, solve the mystery; they prove that the criminal was none other than a relative of Halliday's, who, being beset by debts, had stolen the necklace to hock it. William does not give Douglas away; instead, he leaves, giving Miss Bruce and Douglas his blessings.

James Kevin McGuinness, Howard Emmett Rogers, and George Harmon Coxe wrote the screen play; George Fitzmaurice directed it, and John W. Considine, Jr., produced it. In the cast are Nat Pendelton, Monty Woolley, E. E. Clive, and others.

Not for children. Class B.



### "Condemned Women" with Sally Eilers, Louis Hayward and Anne Shirley

(RKO, March 18; time, 77 min.)

A good program prison melodrama. It holds one's interest throughout, particularly because of the sympathy one feels for the leading characters—it is established that Sally Eilers, one of the prisoners, had been a victim of circumstances, and that Anne Shirley, another prisoner, had sacrificed her freedom to protect the man she loved, so as to insure their future happiness. The prison break, lead by the most vicious of the inmates (Lee Patrick, is thrilling, because of skilful manipulation. It is pretty strong, though, for Miss Patrick, while escaping, is shown killing two women, the prison doctor and Miss Shirley. Miss Shirley's death saddens the spectator. The romance is developed logically:—

Louis Hayward, prison psychiatrist, while testing the different prisoners, recognizes Sally Eilers as the girl who had tried to jump off the boat bound for the prison and whom he had saved. She is dispirited and refuses his offer to help her see things in a different light. He asks the Warden to assign her to him as his nurse. Close association with Hayward soon changes her, and she falls in love with him, as he does with her. The Warden, who had found out about the affair from his malicious head matron, appeals to Miss Eilers to break up the romance for Hayward's sake, for he felt that Hayward's career would be ruined if he were to marry an ex-convict. Miss Eilers, feeling that what the Warden had said was true, arranges with Miss Patrick, another prisoner, to join her in a prison break. Everything goes off as they had planned: by breaking a steam pipe and letting the smoke seep through the prison, they start a panic. Miss Patrick, who had stolen a gun, kills a woman doctor, because she had tried to stop her, and then Miss Shirley, who had accidentally stepped in her way. Miss Eilers and Miss Patrick escape in a car; but Miss Patrick, who had received a gun wound, dies. Miss Eilers is finally caught. At her trial for murder she refuses to talk. Hayward, who had found out the truth, obtains the court's permission to interrogate witnesses. He brings out the fact that she had been motivated to join the break just to help him. The Judge dismisses the murder charge, ordering Miss Eilers to finish her first prison term. The lovers part looking forward to the day when they would be married.

Lionel Houser wrote the story and screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are Esther Dale, Leona Roberts, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "Monastery"

(World Pictures; running time, 65 min.)

This picture, centering around two Catholic monastic orders, is fine entertainment for persons of the Catholic faith. As for the general public, its appeal will be directed to those interested in the unusual.

The first Order shown is the St. Bernard Monastery, at Switzerland; the Monks at this Monastery do heroic work in rescuing travellers lost or injured on the St. Bernard Pass. They are all skilled skiers, who have no thought of personal danger when they set out on their hazardous work. If the Monks arrive too late, the victim is brought back to the Monastery, where he is buried. One scene shows the cellar, where the remains of the victims are on display. The Monks at St. Bernard are always busy, doing something useful, but, of course, not neglectful of their prayers.

The Trappist Monks at a Monastery in France, next shown, lead a different kind of life. It is more secluded, and the routine is one of constant self-denial and complete devotion to prayers. The Monks eat but once a day, and at that a simple meal, during which prayers are read to them. They very seldom speak, for theirs is a contemplative sort of existence, in which prayer suffices.

The narration by the Reverend Michael J. Ahern, S.J., offers all the explanations one needs about the customs.

Robert Alexandre directed it.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Kathleen" with Sally O'Neil

(J. H. Hoffberg; time, 70 min.)

Although not perfect technically, "Kathleen" should entertain Irish audiences well, since the background is Ireland, and the characters are all natives, who participate in the music, dancing, and comedy. The story is very simple and comes to an obvious conclusion. Aside from the occa-

sional singing by Tom Burke, and the novelty of seeing the Irish countryside, it holds little for those who are not of Irish descent. With the exception of the situation near the end, where Miss O'Neil and Burke attempt to overtake and prevent her uncle from illegally crossing the border with horses, the story lacks excitement:—

Since the death of her father and mother, Miss O'Neil had been supporting her young brother and sister. With the help of Burke, who loved her and wanted to marry her, she is able to accept the invitation of her aunt (Sara Allgood) to return to Ireland with her sister and brother and to live at her farm. But Miss Allgood's husband (Pat Noonan), who lived off the bounty of his wealthy but skinflint sister (Jeanne Stuart), resented the fact that he had to feed three more persons. His sister, who managed the estate of her wealthy nephew (Jack Daly), insists that the two younger children be sent to a convent. Miss O'Neil believes this was Daly's desire; but she soon realizes that she had been mistaken. She and Daly fall in love with each other. Burke arrives in Ireland with the good news that he was at last able to marry Miss O'Neil. In the meantime, Miss Stuart, thinking that Daly wanted to marry Miss O'Neil, plans to involve him in a scandal by having Noonan drive horses belonging to Daly across the border. Miss O'Neil and Burke rush after him to prevent him from doing this. In a struggle, Noonan falls in front of the oncoming horses and is killed. Burke finds out that Miss O'Neil loved Daly and gives her up. Having been discovered as a singer, Burke rises to fame; Miss O'Neil marries Daly.

John Glen wrote the story, and Marjorie Deans, the screen play; Norman Lee directed it, and John F. Argyle produced it. Ethel Griffies and Baby Brenda are in the cast.

Suitability, Class A.

### "The Adventures of Marco Polo" with Gary Cooper, Basil Rathbone and Sigrid Gurie

(United Artists, March 4; time, 104 min.)

Expert performances and a lavish production are the highlights of this adventure-comedy. But its entertainment value lies in the comedy more than in the adventure, for, with the exception of the thrilling closing scenes, the story lacks fast action. Because of this, its appeal should be directed more to sophisticated audiences. There is no doubt, however, that it will draw well at the box-office, first, because of Gary Cooper's popularity, and, secondly, because of the fame of the character he portrays. The picture is "big" from a production standpoint—that is in sets and mob scenes. The romance is handled in good taste, and with an eye to comedy. The action unfolds in ancient times:—

Marco Polo (Cooper), in company with his trusted book-keeper Binguccio (Ernest Truex), leaves Venice for China, there to open up trade between the two nations. Marco and Binguccio go through storms, shipwrecks, sandstorms, and much hardship until they, bedraggled, finally arrive in Peking, their destination. Marco is received by the great Kublai Khan (George Barbier) and his right-hand man, a cruel Saracen, Ahmed (Basil Rathbone). Marco meets and falls in love with Princess Kukachin (Sigrid Gurie). When this becomes known to Ahmed, he contrives to have Marco sent to the camp of the enemy Lord Kaidu (Alan Hale), as a spy. Kaidu sees in Marco a chance for release from his marital slavery, and orders him to keep his wife (Binnie Barnes) amused, so that he might carry on other affairs. In the meantime, Ahmed tricks Kublai Khan into leading his Army in battle against Japan, knowing it was a losing battle. With the Khan gone, he takes over the powers, and informs the Princess that she would have to marry him. The defeated Khan returns, helpless to assert his authority against Ahmed. The princess sends word to Marco to help her. Marco induces the over-taxed Kaidu to attack the Palace. Ahmed tricks them, and for a time it looked as if they would all be killed. But Marco, succeeding in blowing up the Palace Gates with gunpowder, leads the army in. He rushes into the palace in time to stop the wedding ceremony between Ahmed and the Princess. In a fierce fight with Marco, Ahmed falls into a pit of hungry lions and is devoured. Marco restores peace between the Khan and Kaidu. He obtains the coveted trade agreements, and then sets sail with the Princess, presumably to escort her to her fiancé, King of Persia. But Marco and the Princess had other ideas; they would make it their own honeymoon trip.

N. A. Pogson wrote the story, and Robert E. Sherwood, the screen play; Archie Mayo directed it, and George Haight, in association with Mr. Goldwyn, produced it. In the cast are H. B. Warner, Robert Grieg, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



discussing it. It is intended to restore to exhibitors some of the rights which they enjoyed (and which are enjoyed by the buyers of every other class of goods) when pictures were sold by name with an outline of the story and with mention of the directing and acting personnel and before all provisions protecting the exhibitors against substitutions were removed from the contract. The provision in question reads as follows:

If a motion-picture film which has been leased in commerce is substantially different from the synopsis hereinabove required, whether in respect of the outline or the manner of treatment, the exhibitor may cancel the lease as to such film without liability for breach of contract and may recover all damages suffered by him because of such difference, or he may retain the lease and recover damages for a breach of warranty.

#### "WHOSE FAITH IS AT STAKE?"

"It is easy to say that exhibitors who favor the Ncely Bill or other legislation beneficial to themselves are prompted by a spirit of vengeance or are otherwise acting in bad faith. But it is not legitimate argument against the merits of the bill and it has the unfortunate effect to open the way to an inquiry concerning the faith—good or bad—of those who raise this false issue. Allied does not have to apologize for its efforts to settle industry disputes within the industry. Allied leaders have always been on hand and have always cooperated when there appeared to be any chance of accomplishing good for the industry. During all these years the distributors belonging to the Hays Association alone have had the power to remedy abuses in the sale and distribution of films and conditions have grown steadily worse.

"Thousands of exhibitors who in recent years have been induced by distributor advertising to sign contracts in the belief that certain pictures would be delivered thereunder, and have suffered from all manner of substitution under the standard contract, and have had their product taken away from them by distributor-owned chains, will not be concerned about charges of bad faith against their leaders when they recall that at the Trade Practice Conference in 1927 the distributors adopted the following resolutions published as Rules Three, Five and Fourteen:

#### "RULE THREE

"*Resolved*, That the substitution by a producer or distributor for any photoplay contracted for by any exhibitor, as the photoplay of a specified star or of a specified director, or based upon a specified story, book, or play, or any photoplay in which such specified star does not appear, or which has not been directed by such specified director, or which is not based upon such specified story, book, or play, as the case may be, unless with the consent of the exhibitor, is an unfair trade practice.

"*Example*.—This resolution was adopted with the understanding that if the contract mentions neither star, cast, director, nor author in the description of the story, which in the work sheet is described as a play of college life, but when delivered proves to be a story dealing with the mining fields of Pennsylvania, would be a substitution within the meaning of the resolution.

#### "RULE FIVE

"Whereas the use of misleading or salacious advertising is recognized as an evil, and

"Whereas the distributors of motion pictures represented in the membership of the film boards of trade themselves will not use misleading or salacious advertising in connection with their product:

"*Resolve*, That it is a fair trade practice to use their best efforts to discourage others in the industry from using misleading or salacious advertising.

#### "RULE FOURTEEN

"*Resolved*, That the use of buying power for the purchase of more photoplays than an exhibitor can consume, in order to deprive a competing exhibitor of the opportunity of purchasing his supply of photoplays, whether it be an attempt to corner the market against such competing exhibitor, or whether it be with the thought of forcing a competing exhibitor out of business, or the compelling of such competing exhibitor to sell his theater, is an unfair trade practice.

ABRAM F. MYERS."

## BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 3

### Twentieth Century-Fox

"Thank You Mr. Moto," with Peter Lorre, Thomas Beck and Jayne Regan, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel, and directed by Norman Foster, from a screen play by Mr. Foster and Willis Cooper: Good-Fair.

"Love and Hisses," with Walter Winchell, Ben Bernie and Simone Simon, produced by Kenneth MacGowan, and directed by Sidney Lanfield, from a screen play by Art Arthur and Curtis Kenyon: Very Good-Good.

"City Girl," with Phyllis Brooks, Ricardo Cortez and Robert Wilcox, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel, and directed by Alfred Werker, from a screen play by Frances Hyland, Robin Harris, and Lester Ziffren: Good-Fair.

"Tarzan's Revenge," with Eleanor Holm and Glenn Morris, produced by Sol Lesser, and directed by D. Ross Lederman, from a screen play by Robert L. Johnson and Jay Vann: Poor.

"Change of Heart," with Gloria Stuart and Michael Whalen, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel, and directed by James Tinling, from a screen play by Frances Hyland and Albert Ray: Fair.

"Hawaiian Buckaroo," with Smith Ballew and Evalyn Knapp, produced by Sol Lesser, and directed by Ray Taylor, from a screen play by Dan Jarrett: Good-Poor.

"Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo," with Warner Oland, produced by John Stone, and directed by Eugene Ford from a screen play by Charles Belden and Jerry Cady: Good-Fair.

"Happy Landing," with Sonja Henie, Don Ameche and Cesar Romero, produced by David Hempstead, and directed by Roy Del Ruth, from a screen play by Milton Sperling and Boris Ingster: Excellent-Very Good.

"International Settlement," with George Sanders and Dolores Del Rio, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel, and directed by Eugene Forde, from a screen play by Lou Breslow and John Patrick: Good-Fair.

"Checkers," with Jane Withers, Stuart Erwin and Una Merkel, produced by John Stone, and directed by H. Bruce Humberstone, from a screen play by Lynn Root, Frank Fenton, Robert Chapin, and Karen DeWolf: Good-Fair.

Thirty-two pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings, including the Westerns, from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 4; Very Good-Fair, 2; Good-Fair, 9; Good-Poor, 3; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 2; Poor, 1.

The first 32 of the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns, were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 4; Good, 9; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 3.

### United Artists

"The Hurricane," with Dorothy Lamour, Jon Hall and Mary Astor, produced by Samuel Goldwyn, and directed by John Ford, from a screen play by Dudley Nichols: Excellent-Very Good.

"Action for Slander," with Clive Brook, produced by Victor Saville, and directed by Tim Whelan, from a screen play by Miles Malleon: Fair.

"I Met My Love Again," with Joan Bennett and Henry Fonda, produced by Walter Wanger, and directed by Arthur Ripley and Joshua Logan, from a screen play by David Hertz: Good-Fair.

"The Goldwyn Follies," with Adolphe Menjou, Andrea Leeds and Kenny Baker, produced by George Haight, in association with Samuel Goldwyn, and directed by George Marshall, from a screen play by Ben Hecht: Very Good-Good.

Fifteen pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 4; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 1; Poor, 1.

The first 15 of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Good, 5; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 1; Poor, 1.



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No. 13

## SIDNEY KENT'S BLOCK-BOOKING VIEWS

Under date of March 10, Mr. Sidney R. Kent, president of Twentieth Century-Fox, sent a circular letter to every independent theatre in the United States condemning the Neely-Pettengill Bill, urging the owners of such theatres to fight against its enactment into a law.

"Independent exhibitors of this country," starts Mr. Kent's circular letter, "will rue the day the Neely Bill becomes a law. Setting aside for a moment the question of exhibitor grievances that may be legitimate, let me say that any exhibitor leader who tells his following that this legislation is for their good is either ignorant or false. An article published this week states 'Exhibitors can still buy in blocks under the Neely Bill as before.' This is also misleading. A detailed synopsis and a statement of the treatment of the dialogue of each picture must be made a part of each contract. Yes, they could if any producer were stupid enough to try and write an accurate description of the kind called for in this Bill and run the risk of criminal prosecution and to be fined in addition. Actually the Bill itself will make any sale impossible except the sale of a finished picture after screening. There isn't a man in the industry today who could take a finished picture, let alone a projected one for the future, and based on the finished picture write a descriptive analysis that would be safe or stand up—not one that couldn't be picked to pieces technically if some one wanted to—and, in my opinion, no producer would run the risk or could afford to run it. . . ."

Since almost every independent exhibitor has received a copy of this circular letter, it is hardly necessary for this paper to reproduce it in whole. It might only be added that Mr. Kent attempts to establish the following facts:

- (1) No accurate synopsis can be written from a finished picture.
- (2) No producer will be able to sell to the exhibitor pictures until they are finished.
- (3) The selling will have to be done at the exchange, where the exhibitor will have an opportunity to view the picture; and since many exhibitors are far away from the exchange city it will be highly inconvenient for them to buy pictures satisfactorily under the Neely-Pettengill law.
- (4) The circuits will have the advantage over every independent exhibitor, because they will have buyers in every centre, an expense the independent exhibitor cannot afford.
- (5) The Neely-Pettengill Bill is more drastic than the English Quota Law, for under the English law all a distributor has to do is to tradeshow a picture and his responsibility ceases, whereas under the Neely-Pettengill Law the provisions of the law will not be satisfied when a picture is shown to others; it must be shown to the buyer himself. "A picture might have played in a thousand theatres and yet, under this Bill, you couldn't lease it without screening it for every account that hadn't seen it and still furnish a synopsis."
- (6) He demands to be told the names of the exhibitors who have been forced out of business because of the prevalence of block-booking and blind-selling. On the other hand, he states that he is willing to name all the exhibitor leaders who are supporting this Bill and to point out to the fact that most of them today own more theatres than they owned twenty years ago. He also calls the exhibitors' attention to the fact that there are major picture companies that are still in the courts for reorganization, meaning by this that they are not doing so well as the exhibitor leaders whom he has offered to name.
- (7) The Neely-Pettengill Bill is a minority Bill, worked out with a punitive purpose in mind.
- (8) The original draft of the Bill (the Brookhart Bill)

had a morality motive behind it, but such a motive is not justified today; pictures are now clean.

(9) The Bill will not prohibit an exhibitor from showing a picture such as "Ecstasy," which was bought by thousands of exhibitors, "of their own accord"; the same is true of many so-called hygiene pictures, shown in many theatres without the approval of the Production Code Administrator (Joe Breen). All these pictures were bought singly, and not as a part of any block of pictures.

(10) The clique that advocates this Bill is the same one that wants to destroy the producer-distributors. But the real destruction will, in his opinion, be brought to the exhibitors if the Bill should go through.

(11) Only a few companies, including Twentieth Century-Fox, will be able to survive, because of the necessity for large money reserves for production.

(12) When pictures have to be bought one at a time, thousands of exhibitors will not be able to maintain their present position, for in a year or two the supply of pictures will be even smaller than the supply of today, which is considered insufficient.

For all these reasons, Kent says, the exhibitor who believes that this Bill will prove a triumph to him is writing his own bankruptcy. And he says that he had weighed carefully every statement he made in that letter before making it.

He closed his letter by urging every exhibitor who agrees with him to write to his Senator making his views known.

This paper regrets, indeed, that Mr. Kent should have descended to vituperation by calling the proponents of the Neely-Pettengill Bill either ignorant or false, for this matter concerns an issue, and issues are not resolved by personal abuse. A man of his position and standing should have kept himself above pettiness, confining himself to proving his views by the presentation of facts.

Let us now examine Mr. Kent's statements with a view to determining whether he has presented any facts, and if so whether his views of what the Bill will do are sound or unsound:

During the hearing of the Bill before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Mr. Kent was one of the witnesses who expressed his views of the Bill. The following is part of the questions by Congressman Pettengill and Mr. Kent's answers:

"MR. PETTENGILL. Now, how does the exhibitor in England buy your product?"

"MR. KENT. He buys as many pictures as we have trade shown and can give him at one time. You see, the law there, as I tried to explain is that you must first finish your picture and then show it. If you have got 15 completed you can show 15 . . . (Rec. p. 261).

"MR. PETTENGILL. Now, if the motion picture industry can operate, and I assume with a profit, in Great Britain, or you would not be there—

"MR. KENT. Yes, sir.

"MR. PETTENGILL. Where the pictures are actually produced before they are sold, why can that be done in England and not in the United States?"

"MR. KENT. That is because of the law in England. That is the distinction that I made when I said to you, so far as I am concerned, it would not bother me, or the Fox Films, if you gentlemen passed a law which is as fair to the man who makes the merchandise as it is to the man who buys it, because in England it applies to both sides. While I have to finish my picture before he buys it, he also has to

(Continued on last page)



**"The First Hundred Years" with Robert Montgomery, Virginia Bruce and Warren William**

(MGM, March 11; time, 73 min.)

This sophisticated marital comedy-drama, produced pretty lavishly, should appeal to high-class audiences. It is doubtful if it will attract the masses. For one thing, it lacks fast action—the story is developed mostly by dialogue; for another, the story itself has little substance. The actions of the heroine are not such as to awaken sympathy, for she is concerned more with her own career than with the happiness of her husband. On one or two occasions the witty dialogue provokes laughter, although it occasionally becomes risqué:—

Robert Montgomery, boat designer, having been supported for a long time by his wife (Virginia Bruce), a successful actors' and writers' agent, is happy when he obtains a job with a large shipbuilding concern at \$15,000 a year. Miss Bruce is happy, too, until she learns that Montgomery expected her to give up her business and live in a small Massachusetts town near the shipyards. She rebels at this; and so they part. Upon the advice of her partner (Warren William) and their lawyer (Alan Dinehart), she starts an action for separation. She is furious when the Judge, after a futile attempt to bring the couple together, orders that she pay Montgomery alimony; and to add to her anger, Montgomery, in order to teach her a lesson, takes the money. When she discovers that she was to become a mother, she rushes to him to beg for reconciliation; but before she had a chance to tell him about the baby, he informs her that he had no desire to take her back. Crestfallen, she leaves. But she doesn't get far, for Montgomery, having heard the news from William, goes after her; they fall into each other's arms.

Norman Krasna wrote the story and produced it. Melville Baker wrote the screen play, and Richard Thorpe directed it. In the cast are Binnie Barnes, Harry Davenport, and Nydia Westman.

Not particularly suitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Bluebeard's Eighth Wife" with Claudette Colbert and Gary Cooper**

(Paramount, March 25; time, 90 min.)

The combination of Claudette Colbert and Gary Cooper, together with the unusual title, should mean something to the box-office. But it is doubtful if patrons will be entertained, for, aside from the first ten or fifteen minutes, which are extremely amusing, this picture falls flat. Most of the time only Miss Colbert and Cooper are on the screen—talking, talking, talking, to the point where one begins to squirm. The picture lacks the familiar Lubitsch touch, dealing with subtle hints at sex; instead, the innuendos here are rather crude and at times just vulgar. The fact that the picture is not in the excellent class is no reflection on the two stars, who are both good:—

Cooper, an American vacationing in Paris, goes shopping in a high-class department store; but he finds it difficult to convince the salesman that all he wanted to buy was the top part of pajamas. Miss Colbert, another shopper, comes to his rescue by offering to buy the bottom of the pajamas. Although very much attracted by her beauty and charm, Cooper refrains from asking for her name. Having complained about his suite at the hotel, Cooper is escorted to the suite that was occupied by Edward Everett Horton, an impoverished nobleman, who had been ordered out. Cooper is amazed to find Horton wearing the bottom part of the pajamas Miss Colbert had bought. He learns that Miss Colbert was his daughter. They finally meet, and Cooper convinces her that she should marry him. The day before the marriage, Miss Colbert learns, to her amazement, that Cooper had been married seven times, divorcing them because they bored him. At first she refuses to marry him; but then she changes her mind. First, she demands that he settle a large sum of money on her; then, on the honeymoon, she treats him as if he were a stranger. Her idea was to train him so that he would not want to leave her. Complications set in when her plans to make him jealous go wrong; believing that she had been having an affair with David Niven, he agrees to give her a divorce, and leaves. After a search, Miss Colbert finds him in a sanitarium recovering from a case of nerves. By having him tied in a strait-jacket, she forces him to listen to her. It ends in a reconciliation.

The plot was adapted from the play by Alfred Savoir; Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder wrote the screen play, and Mr. Lubitsch directed and produced it. In the cast are Elizabeth Patterson, Warren Hymer, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Class B.

**"Jezebel" with Bette Davis, Henry Fonda and George Brent**

(Warner Bros., March 26; time, 103 min.)

Powerful dramatic entertainment. It is unusual in its way, for it makes no concessions to the box-office either in characterizations or development of plot; and it is from its honesty that it derives its power. For instance, the heroine is not painted as a lily; she is shown to be hot-tempered, emotionally uncontrolled, a person who resorts to contemptible tricks to get what she wants. Nevertheless, one understands her and even sympathizes with her. In the end, one's heart goes out to her, because of the great sacrifice she makes. It is not what one would call cheerful entertainment, and may not appeal to the rank and file, but it should please those who like good acting. The action takes place in New Orleans, in the '50's:—

Bette Davis, madly in love with Henry Fonda, makes life miserable for both by her irascibility. Although he, too, loved her madly, he breaks off the engagement and leaves. During the year that he was away, she changes, living in hopes that he would come back to her. At the end of a year he returns, but married, to a Yankee (Margaret Lindsay). This was more than Miss Davis could stand. Even though they were her guests at her plantation, she makes herself as vicious as possible, going so far as to start a quarrel between Fonda and one of her guests (George Brent), hoping it would end in a duel. Fonda receives word that his partner at New Orleans had been stricken with yellow fever, which was raging there. He rushes to him. Miss Davis, continuing the taunting, arouses the anger of Fonda's young brother (Richard Cromwell); this causes a duel between him and Brent, in which Cromwell kills Brent. Word comes to them that Fonda, too, had been stricken, and that he had been taken to Miss Davis' town house. Without a word, Miss Davis rushes to him, ignoring the danger to herself. Miss Lindsay and the others follow. When word comes that Fonda, like all the other victims, would be sent to a leper colony for isolation, Miss Davis pleads with Miss Lindsay, who wanted to go with her husband, to permit her to go instead; Miss Lindsay finally agrees to this. Miss Davis rides away on a cart where Fonda and other victims had been put, perhaps to death.

The plot was adapted from the play by Owen Davis; Clements Ripley, Abem Finkel, and John Huston wrote the screen play, William Wyler directed it, and Henry Blanke produced it. In the cast are Fay Bainter, Donald Crisp, and others.

No part of the action is immoral, but it is too depressing for children, and for many adults. Suitability, Class A.

**"Over the Wall" with Dick Foran and June Travis**

(Warner Bros., April 2; time, 66 min.)

A fair program prison melodrama. It differs somewhat from the general run of pictures of this type in that it is not as depressing; it is more concerned with the building up of the character of one of the prisoners than with prison life itself. But the story is far-fetched, particularly in the closing scenes, which are somewhat ridiculous. Dick Foran sings a few songs pleasantly:—

Foran, a truck driver, is eager to become a prizefighter. He finally induces his manager (Ward Bond) to arrange a bout for him with a fighter managed by Dick Purcell, a gangster. Foran is knocked out during the first round, for Bond, who had been working with Purcell, had framed the fight by putting a piece of lead in the glove of Foran's opponent. When Foran comes to and learns about the frame-up, he rushes to Purcell's apartment to see Bond; he knocks him out and then leaves. Purcell, who felt that Bond knew too much about him, sees an opportunity to kill Bond and place the blame on some one else. While Bond was still unconscious, he crushes his skull, killing him; he then calls the police, accusing Foran of the murder. Foran is arrested, tried, and sentenced to five years imprisonment. He becomes an unmanageable convict, resenting the fact no one believed him innocent. But he changes under the influence of the prison Chaplain (John Littel), who promises to further his career as a singer. Foran learns from George E. Stone, another convict who was on his deathbed, how Purcell had framed him. His sweetheart (June Travis), who had taken a job with Purcell to get evidence against him, appeals to Littel for help. Purcell is finally arrested and held for the murder. Foran is pardoned, looking forward to a career as a singer, with Miss Travis as his wife.

Warden Lewis E. Lawes wrote the story, and Crane Wilbur and George Bricker, the screen play; Frank McDonald directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Mary Hart, Veda Ann Borg, and others.

The murder makes it unsuitable for children. Class B.



### "The Gaiety Girls" with Jack Hulbert and Patricia Ellis

(London Film-United Art., March 18; time, 73 min.)

A fairly entertaining musical comedy. The story of mistaken identity, with its backstage atmosphere, lacks novelty; but, since the action unfolds at a fast pace, one's attention is held. The chief trouble with it is the fact that American audiences have seen bigger and better musicals than this one. There is nothing outstanding in this production, for the music and dance routines are only fair, and the leading players have little drawing power at the box-office. Where patrons are not, however, too exacting in their demands, it should satisfy, for in addition to the music, there is comedy and romance:—

Patricia Ellis, late for rehearsal, accepts a lift from a chauffeur driving an expensive car owned by millionaire Jack Hulbert. On the way to the theatre, they meet with an accident. The chauffeur, having been summoned to court, calls at the theatre to ask Miss Ellis to testify on his behalf. Seeing the car, and learning to whom it belonged, the chorus girls believe that Miss Ellis was engaged to Hulbert. The rumor spreads and soon Miss Ellis is besieged by tradespeople who send her all kinds of expensive things. And the producer, being badly in need of cash, makes her the star, hoping she would use her influence with Hulbert to finance the show. Hulbert, shocked at receiving bills for a chorus girl's clothes, goes to the theatre to see her. Miss Ellis, mistaking him for a newspaper reporter, tells him some silly story of how she had met Hulbert. Hulbert, charmed by her beauty, falls in love with her and decides to continue the hoax. When the producer demands that she arrange a meeting between him and her millionaire suitor, she asks Hulbert to pretend to be the millionaire. He gives the producer a check for a million francs; but Miss Ellis tells the producer to tear it up because, as she thought, he was just a poor newspaper reporter. Eventually everything is cleared up. The play is successful, the producer becomes rich, and Miss Ellis wins a millionaire-husband.

Arthur Macrae wrote the scenario, Thornton Freeland directed it, and Gunther Stapenhorst produced it. In the cast are Arthur Riscoe, Googie Withers, Sydney Fairbrother, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Accidents Will Happen" with Ronald Reagan and Gloria Blondell

(Warner Bros., April 9; time, 62 min.)

A fair program melodrama, centering around the fake accident racket. Although the idea is somewhat novel, it is developed along familiar lines, lacking freshness, in dialogue as well as in action. For instance, Ronald Reagan (hero), in order to uncover the workings of the fake accident ring, joins their gang so as to get the evidence he needed against them. To Sheila Bromley falls the lot of playing a most obnoxious character—a wife who betrays her own husband, choosing to involve him in a fake accident claim, so as to make money for herself thereby, knowing well that it would mean the end of his job as an insurance adjuster. She does this by joining up with Addison Richards, a lawyer, and Dick Purcell, heads of a loan company, the brains behind the fake accident racket. Being indebted to them for a \$500 loan she had made on her car, she tells them she could be of assistance to them in their racket, because, if she were to testify, her husband would believe in the validity of the claim. And that is just what happens. But it is discovered that the claim had been a fraudulent one and so Reagan is discharged from the insurance company. Down and out he takes the suggestion of Gloria Blondell, owner of a cigar stand in the building where he worked, to fight the crooks. By pretending to run a fake accident racket himself, he becomes acquainted with them; he takes Miss Blondell in as his assistant. In the meantime, Miss Bromley obtains a divorce, her intention being to marry Richards. A fake accident is perpetrated, with Miss Blondell as the "victim." At the trial, she is brought into the courtroom on a stretcher. To the surprise of all, she jumps off the stretcher. Reagan, their attorney, and she then give all the facts to the Judge with reference to the ring. The crooks, including Miss Bromley, are rounded up and arrested. Reagan receives his old job back, at an increase, and he and Miss Blondell look forward to marriage.

George Bricker wrote the story, and he, Anthony Coldey, and Morton Grant, the screen play; William Clemens directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Hugh O'Connell, Kenneth Harlan, and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.

### "The Crime of Dr. Hallet" with Ralph Bellamy, Josephine Hutchinson and William Gargan

(Universal, March 11; time, 68 min.)

Somewhat depressing entertainment. Practically all the action takes place in the jungle where Ralph Bellamy, a doctor, and his assistants, do research work in connection with a serum for the cure of red fever. It may appeal to those who find scientific talk and procedure interesting; but the masses will probably be bored. For one thing, the jungle background and the crude living and working quarters are not particularly appealing; for another, the sight of sick monkeys, in which had been injected the fever germ, and of persons in the throes of the disease, is not exactly conducive to enjoyment. The love interest is mildly pleasant:—

Bellamy and his assistant (William Gargan), overworked and despondent because of their failure to discover a serum for the cure of red fever, are delighted when they receive word that another doctor was to be sent to assist them. But when the doctor (John King) arrives, they are disappointed, for he was a young man. They give him menial work to do and refuse to discuss with him their research work. King, working on his own, discovers the cure, which he writes up in his diary. Just as he was going to disclose his findings to Bellamy, Bellamy himself hits on what he thought was a cure. King injects himself with the fever germ to permit Bellamy to test his cure. But it does not work, and King dies. Bellamy finds King's notes. Feeling miserable because he had not shown confidence in King, he decides to do something to bring King's name to the public. He posts a notice of his own death and, assuming King's name, continues the work on his discovery, using King's money. Josephine Hutchinson, a competent doctor, arrives as the new assistant. Just when things were going along well, King's wife (Barbara Read) arrives and discovers the deception. She accuses Bellamy of having killed her husband, and informs him she would prosecute him. But she is taken ill with the fever. Bellamy saves her life with her husband's serum discovery. Gargan, by appealing to her vanity, convinces her that if she were to take Bellamy back for trial she would only be giving him publicity, whereas, if she went home alone, with the record of her husband's discovery, she would become famous. Every one is happy when she finally sails. Bellamy and Miss Hutchinson, who had fallen in love with each other, look forward to a useful life together.

Carl Dreher wrote the story, and Lester Cole and Brown Holmes, the screenplay; Sylvan Simon directed it, and Edmund Grainger produced it. Charles Stevens and Nella Walker are in the cast.

Morally suitable. Class A.

### "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" with Shirley Temple

(20th Century-Fox, March 18; time, 81 min.)

Delightful entertainment. As a matter of fact, many picture-goers may feel it is the best picture Shirley Temple has yet appeared in. The young star, not only touches one's heartstrings by her acting, but also gives one great joy by her expert tap dancing. With Bill Robinson, the famous colored dancer, as her mate in the closing scenes, she acts like a regular trouper. The friendship between Shirley and Randolph Scott is heart-warming. There is a romance, too, between Gloria Stuart and Scott.

Very little has been left of the original Kate Douglas Wiggin story, only the title, and the fact that the young heroine lives for a time at her aunt's farm. In this instance, she had been left with her aunt by her step-father, a loafer who had vainly tried to induce Scott to recognize her singing talents so as to give her a job, to enable him to live on her earnings. But in vain. When Shirley eventually becomes famous as a radio star, the step-father again appears on the scene, and with the aid of a crooked lawyer he is able to take her away from her aunt. But Shirley, who had learned to love her aunt (Helen Westley), as well as her cousin (Miss Stuart) and the talent scout (Scott), and wanted to be with them and not with her step-father, pretends that she had lost her voice when she was brought before the microphone. In this manner she causes her step-father to lose his contract for her. Eventually she is restored to those she loved.

Karl Tunberg and Don Ettlinger wrote the screen play. Allan Dwan directed it, and Raymond Griffith produced it. Phyllis Brooks, Slim Summerville, The Raymond Scott Quintet, Alan Dinehart and others are in the cast.

Good for the entire family—Class A.



wait until he sees it before he can buy it. That is the distinction I made; but this bill does not do that. . . . (Hearings p. 262.)

"MR. PETTENGILL. So, if the density of population were comparable, you do not think that the British system would work a hardship in this country?

"MR. KENT. I say, so far as I am concerned, Mr. Chairman, if this Committee passes that kind [British] of a bill it is O. K. with me so long as you treat both sides alike; so long as I am not asked to spend \$20,000,000 and speculate on production which is the risk, and then I have handcuffs put on me by this [Neely-Pettengill] bill, while the other man does not have the same regulation.

"I say if you legislate and say to me, 'Mr. Kent, hereafter you must only sell your pictures after they are made, because we want to protect the morals of the community,' and 'you can only sell your pictures after they are finished,' I say fine, but do not let the man who buys the product have any advantage over me. Let him also buy the product after it is finished so that he cannot have an alibi then and we can sell each one on merit. That is all right with me." (Hearings, p. 263.)

By this testimony you see that Sidney Kent, at the time he was testifying before the Committee, did not think that the Neely-Pettengill Bill would prevent the exhibitor from buying his pictures in a block. As a matter of fact, he was convinced of it so thoroughly that he told the Committee that the fair thing it could do would be so to modify the bill as to make it compulsory for the exhibitor to wait until the picture is finished before he might have the lawful right to buy it.

So much for his views at that time. But there is another time during which his views were entirely different from his present views. Not very many of you realize, or are aware of the fact, that Sidney R. Kent is the first prominent leader in the motion picture industry to advocate the elimination of block-booking and blind-selling. In the beginning of the 1923-24 season, when he was general manager of Famous Players-Lasky (Paramount), he sold the Paramount pictures on the Selective Booking System, under the slogan, "Look Before You Book!" The following is the first paragraph of an editorial that appeared in the September 15, 1923, issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS:

"You have, no doubt, read Famous Players-Lasky's announcement informing the trade that commencing November its pictures, before being offered to exhibitors, will first be shown in Key-City theatres owned either by Famous Players-Lasky or by independent exhibitors with whom it has entered into a business arrangement for the purpose. The object of this new policy is, first, to give an opportunity to each exhibitor to see what he buys, and secondly, to enable Famous Players-Lasky to set on each picture an exhibition value according to its drawing powers, so that the price an exhibitor would be asked to pay should not be arbitrary, as is now the case, but one that has been arrived at by some definite method."

The Kent plan did not succeed then, because the other companies did not follow his lead, and Paramount alone could not have enforced it. But with a law to back up Mr. Kent's former block-booking and blind-selling views, is there any doubt that the system will succeed?

Let us now take up the different points in the Kent circular, as classified in the beginning of this editorial:

(1) If Kent's publicity director, who is paid \$75,000 a year salary, cannot write an accurate synopsis, and if no one else in his highly organized publicity department can do it, then he is wasting his company's money. Personally, I am inclined to believe that Mr. Kent did not write the circular; his health is not of the best and it is natural for him to allow his subordinates to do the writing for him, for we all know that even a school boy can write an accurate synopsis after viewing a picture.

(2) This is true. But it will prove to the exhibitors' advantage.

(3) The selling will not have to be done at the exchange, for the exhibitors will be able to receive reliable reports as to the quality of the different pictures, and they will be guided in the choice of the pictures by the synopses.

(4) The present disadvantage to the exhibitor will not increase, for the circuits now can take away from the independent exhibitor any picture they want, no matter how much more money than the circuits he may be willing to pay. There will be no need for a buyer in each exchange center, either, for the reasons given in paragraph (3).

(5) Nowhere in the Bill is there a provision that com-

pels the distributor to show the picture to the exhibitor before selling it. The statement to the contrary is a fallacy, conceived perhaps out of the theory that an accurate synopsis cannot be written.

(6) If some exhibitors have now more theatres than they had twenty years ago, then some exhibitors must have gone out of business, for the proportion of new theatres is very small. This makes the presentation of names unnecessary. The fact that the major companies have now the best theatres in the country, which formerly were owned mostly by independent exhibitors, is further proof that many independent exhibitors have gone out of business. Some of these may have sold their theatres voluntarily, but Mr. Kent knows, just as we know, that most of them sold their theatres because they knew that, with a circuit threatening to erect a competitive theatre, they had to sell.

As to his statement that some of the major companies are still in bankruptcy, allow me to say that this is the result, not of poor business, but of incompetence, nepotism, overexpansion, extravagance and enormous salaries.

(7) This is a rash statement, unworthy of a man of Mr. Kent's position. But, as I have stated elsewhere in this editorial, I doubt whether Mr. Kent wrote the circular.

(8) The Neely-Pettengill Bill, besides having a morality purpose, is an economic measure, intended to save the independent exhibitor from being either gobbled up by the affiliated circuits or driven out of business.

(9) If the Bill will not prevent an exhibitor from showing a dirty picture, then the producers should have one more reason for letting it go through, for it will take away the alibi from an exhibitor who is in the habit of showing pictures of this type and of then putting the blame on the block-booking and blind-selling system.

(10) This statement, too, is unworthy of a person of Mr. Kent's standing.

(11) Why should Mr. Kent worry about the companies, which, he says, cannot survive under this Bill, when these companies do not object to the Bill?

(12) Why should he worry about the independent exhibitors, since they favor this Bill? Isn't his sympathy for them gratuitous?

His reasons are not sufficient to convince us that the Neely-Pettengill Bill will prove injurious, either to the independent producer-distributors or to the independent exhibitors. And since his company and some other companies will be able to survive under this Bill, he should not bother his head about what will happen to the independents, who want the Bill passed.

But that is not the real motive that is prompting Mr. Kent to lead the campaign against the Bill; the real motive is that the Bill will destroy the monopoly of play-dates enjoyed by the theatre owning major companies.

Mr. Kent is of the conviction, as said, that the independent producers, unable to obtain sufficient funds to produce pictures first and then sell them, will not be able to carry on, and that, as a result of this condition, the supply of film, small now, will become still smaller. I have taken up these views of his again, for I feel able to prove to him and to all those who are in accord with such views, that the opposite will be true. Let us examine the facts:

Today an exhibitor sells to the independent distributor a portion of his playing time. In his exhibition contract, he agrees to offer that playing time as it becomes available. But what actually happens, particularly in the case of the big circuit operator? Try and get it! He holds off booking the smaller pictures until he gets good and ready to book them. In the meantime, he holds up the subsequent-run exhibitors for weeks and weeks. Under the Bill, there will be no procrastination; since the selling of unmade pictures will be made impossible, the playing of the produced pictures will be expedited to such an extent that there will be no waste of playing time. There will be a greater turnover than the most sanguine person could have ever dreamed. A picture will go the round in sixty or ninety days at the most, instead of from six months to a year, as is the case now. This will make available more money for production than the most optimistic persons can ever imagine. It will then be possible to have produced and ready for selling, not a few pictures, but twice or even three times as many as there are ready at any one time now.

As to the quality of the pictures, can any one doubt that it will improve highly? With block-booking out of the way, the meritorious pictures will bring to the producer real money. And with good pictures bringing in such money, there will be no incentive on the part of the producers to make junk, as is the case now.



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No. 14

**AGAIN ABOUT THEATRE OPERATING DISTRIBUTOR EMPLOYEES**

It seems as if the theatre-operating activities of film salesmen and of exchange managers is on the increase. That is what I gather from the multiplication of complaints received at this office.

In one particular territory, the branch manager of a major company has two sons-in-law, one of them on the payroll of the company, whom he is sending around with a view to getting hold of theatres. In one instance he sent one son-in-law to a city in one of the neighboring states to check up the business of an exhibitor, whom he is trying to force into selling him his theatre.

This manager has been accused of frequently checking up exhibitors with such a purpose in mind, and when he fails to induce the exhibitor to sell he "peddles" the information about the exhibitor's business to the other exchanges.

In another instance this branch manager compelled an exhibitor to give one of his sons-in-law a job at \$75 a week, even though he knows nothing about the business of exhibiting pictures.

In still another instance he approached an exhibitor building a new theatre and offered to buy in a part interest. He threatened to sell his films to the opposition if he refused.

It is hard enough for an exhibitor to conduct his theatre profitably when he has as competitors only circuit theatres, but when he has to fight also against distributor employees his lot becomes, indeed, much harder, for such employees, because of their connections, are in a position to make it difficult, and even impossible, for the exhibitor to obtain product.

It is my intention to take up this evil again with a view to putting an end to it if possible. I want to call the attention of the home offices to any such activities on the part of their field representatives. In talking to a prominent attorney, well versed in anti-trust law matters, last week, I was told that such activities on the part of distributor employees may involve their companies in conspiracy actions by exhibitors.

But even if there were no danger of such involvement, the home office executives of the guilty distributor employees must take some action to put an end to this evil, for often their own receipts are affected. It is not illogical, for example, to think that their branch managers may let the theatres in which they are silently interested have the film at rentals and terms far below those they could have obtained from independent exhibitors.

Send me whatever information you can on this subject. Let me have as many facts (not guesses) as possible for presentation to the different home office executives with a request that they conduct their own investigation with a view to ascertaining whether the accusations are founded on fact, so that when they find them accurate they may take appropriate action. Be assured that the source of information will under no circumstances be disclosed to these executives; only the facts will be given to them.

**BITING THEIR OPPONENT'S NOSE**

Under the title, "Fight Clean, Allied," Chick Lewis wrote an editorial in the March 19 issue of his *Showmen's Trade Review* accusing the Allied leaders, particularly Mr. Abram F. Myers, of fighting uncleanly.

"In a Bulletin reeking with charges, abuse and insults," says part of Mr. Lewis' editorial, "Allied comes forth to flay its critics for not agreeing with it and its policies. Nothing, since the start of the Neely Bill agitation, can match this document for tactlessness and in some instances stupidity.

"In the first place, Mr. Myers, in his zeal to push through the Neely Bill and perhaps put himself in line for a swell job on some Federal Commission that will enforce the bill, stops at nothing in his attempt to prove that all who do not agree with Allied are subsidized by the Big Eight and are tools of the Hays Association. Among those he attacks is Sidney R. Kent, who issued a statement opposing the bill."

The rest of the editorial is in the same vein, most of it devoted to assuring the exhibitors that he is not subsidized, and that he is independent in thought in the matter of the Neely-Pettengill Bill as in all matters.

By this editorial Mr. Lewis would have us believe that he is fighting very clean! Oh, indeed, yes! His expression, "Mr. Myers, in his zeal to push through the Neely Bill and perhaps put himself in line for a swell job on some Federal Commission" is not an insinuation unworthy of a man who is supposed to be a moulder of thought; it is sweet-smelling roses.

I have always made it a point to refrain from employing language that says one thing and means another, by reason of the fact that abuses against the persons of those who are opposing an issue is indicative of weakness of position. I feel that people may differ on issues, but should not resort to personalities. The producers, by allowing their friends to resort to personal abuse, convey the impression that their position is very weak.

Mr. Lewis takes to task Mr. Myers for abusing Mr. Kent. I have read the statements Mr. Myers issued on March 14 and 16, but I fail to find anything indicative of personal abuse against Mr. Kent. On the contrary, I find much in them that is respectful. In the statement of March 14, Mr. Myers said partly the following about Mr. Kent:

"So far as Mr. Kent is concerned, Allied has admired his great ability as a salesman and on occasion has compared his sales methods with those employed by his less ethical competitors. But since he has taken it on his shoulders to carry the Big Eight's battle to the exhibitor it becomes proper to inquire why it is that he is always put forward in these struggles and why the exhibitors should beware of him when he pretends to offer them advice concerning their own welfare."

Now I ask Mr. Lewis to point out what part of this statement is abusive of Mr. Kent. On the contrary, it is highly restrained and respectful.

At the close, the Myers statement says: "With the writing of the letter dated March 9, he forfeited the right to be considered in exhibitor circles in any wise different from the other representatives of and spokesmen for the Big Eight who have made no pretense of being the exhibitors' friend."

This statement, too, is restrained.

Mr. Myers did, of course, criticize Mr. Kent for having sent that letter, but his criticism of him was well justified, for it adhered only to facts. For instance, reproducing his testimony before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce so as to show the inconsistency of his statement of what the Neely Bill, if enacted into a law, would do is perfectly proper, a method accepted by civilized society, which decrees that those who take part in a controversial issue must be ready to receive criticism, as long as such criticism is fair, well tempered, and adheres to facts.

Mr. Lewis, in making an abusive reply to Mr. Myers' statement, has not contributed anything toward clarifying the issue regarding the Neely Bill; it merely demonstrates that the opponents of the Neely-Pettengill Bill are acting like the person who, unable to convince his opponent that he is right, bites his opponent's nose.



### "Let's Make a Night of It" with June Clyde and Buddy Rogers

(Universal, [British-made], March 25; time, 66 min.)

A fair program musical comedy. Its appeal will be directed mostly to young folk who enjoy popular music. It was produced in England, and the players, with the exception of June Clyde and Buddy Rogers, are not well known here. Except for lavish sets, there is nothing about it that is particularly outstanding. The picture consists of a series of musical and dancing numbers, all held together by a thin story. As a matter of fact, the almost continuous playing of jazz music becomes a bit tiresome. Six bands take part in the proceedings; but since they are not as well known here as they are in England their presence in the picture won't arouse much excitement at the box-office. The typically English comedy falls somewhat flat. Rogers and Miss Clyde put over their numbers fairly well, and make a pleasant romantic team:—

Rogers, a former band leader, reduced to the position of waiter at a fashionable resort hotel, falls in love with Miss Clyde, daughter of wealthy Fred Emney and Iris Hoccy. He tries his best to win her attention, even following the family when they leave for London. Having learned that Emney, unknown to his family, had become financially involved in a night club, Rogers appeals to him for a job. He is engaged, and soon makes it the most successful club in town. In the meantime, Emney's wife, unknown to him, purchases the down-and-out night club next door to his; she had been duped by a fake Count, who, with his partners, had run away after she had paid over the cash. The police raid both places, arresting every one connected with them. They are finally released, and decide to join forces by breaking through the wall and making one club out of the two. Since there was no doubt as to the success of the venture, Rogers and Miss Clyde turn their thoughts to matrimony.

The plot was adapted from the radio play "The Silver Spoon," by F. McGrew Willis; Hugh Brooke wrote the screen play, Graham Cutts directed it, and Walter C. Mycroft produced it. In the cast are Jack Melford, Claire Luce, and others.

Morally suitable. Class A.

### "The Girl of the Golden West" with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy

(MGM, March 18; time, 120 min.)

Very good! When First National produced it in 1930 without music, it was just fair entertainment. Although the story has not improved with age, this version is much more entertaining, because of the excellent production values, and of the singing by Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. Miss MacDonald is particularly appealing both in voice and appearance, and is largely responsible for the entertainment the picture offers. She acts the part of the western mountain girl with such warmth and understanding, that she makes the character believable. Typical of westerns, it has plentiful shooting and horseback riding. Towards the end, one is held in suspense, this being caused by the fact that Eddy, a notorious bandit, was in danger of being caught by the Sheriff. The outdoor scenes, photographed in sepia tint, are beautiful. The one large number is a colorful fiesta scene, with large groups of dancers and singers:—

Miss MacDonald, owner of a saloon in a mining camp, is respected by all, and loved by Walter Pidgeon, the Sheriff. While on a trip to visit a Padre (H. B. Warner), whom she had known for many years, she meets and falls in love with Nelson Eddy, outlaw leader of a gang of robbers, whom she believed to be a Lieutenant in the Army. She returns home, filled with thoughts of him; and so, when Pidgeon asks her to marry him, she refuses. Eddy arrives at the camp for the purpose of stealing the money the heroine had in safe-keeping for the miners; but when he sees her, he naturally does not carry out his purpose. She invites him to her cabin; he proposes marriage and she accepts. Pidgeon, who had discovered Eddy's identity, goes to Miss MacDonald's cabin, revealing the fact to her; this makes her unhappy. When Pidgeon leaves, she orders Eddy, who had been hiding, to go. Wounded by one of the Sheriff's men, Eddy goes back to her cabin; again she hides him. Pidgeon returns; knowing that Eddy was there he agrees to play Miss MacDonald a game of poker to settle the matter. She loses, which meant that Eddy was to go free and she would marry Pidgeon. On the day of the marriage, the lovers accidentally meet at the church. Pidgeon, overhearing their conversation, decides to give up Miss MacDonald. The lovers marry, and leave for another state to start life anew.

The plot was adapted from the play by David Belasco; Isabel Dawn and Boyce DeGaw wrote the screen play; Robert Z. Leonard directed it and Wm. Anthony McGuire produced it. In the cast are Leo Carrillo, Buddy Ebsen, and others. (This play was produced by First National also in 1923, and by Paramount in 1915, with House Peters.)

Suitable for all. Class A.

### "State Police" with John King, Constance Moore and William Lundigan

(Universal, March 18; time, 60½ min.)

This program melodrama is of minor importance. Obviously produced without much care, and lacking strong box-office names, it will serve its purpose as a second feature in neighborhood houses, where patrons go for action pictures, regardless of production values. The plot is a rehash of the old cops-and-robbers theme, and as such is mildly exciting. It is, however, so far-fetched in some spots that patrons may laugh at the wrong time. A romance is hinted at:—

John King, a State Trooper, when assigned to arrest a criminal wanted for the murder of a miner, decides to take with him recruit William Lundigan. His purpose was to try to teach Lundigan, whose father wanted him to advance in the service, to take his work seriously, for Lundigan had contempt for it all. When they arrive at the mining town, which was run by racketeers who were looting mines and underselling the legitimate coal dealers, they find an aroused populace, who wanted to take matters into their own hands. King induces them to desist for a while, promising to round up the gang himself. Because of Lundigan's inattention to duty, the murderer, whom King had arrested, escapes, injuring another State Trooper in the act. King is trapped by the gangsters, but manages to get the upper hand by threatening to turn them over to the mob that had collected unless they obeyed his orders. In this way he is able to hold them off until additional State Troopers arrive. The gang is then rounded up. Lundigan, sorry for the trouble he had caused, comes to his senses and promises to concentrate on his work. King looks after Miss Moore, whose brother, unknown to her, had been the racketeer leader.

George Waggner wrote the story and screen play, John Rawlins directed it, and Paul Malvern produced it. In the cast are David Oliver, Larry Blake, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Storm in a Teacup" with Vivien Leigh, Rex Harrison and Sara Allgood

(London Film-United Art., February 25; time, 85½ min.)

Definitely a picture for high-class audiences, who enjoy brilliant acting and novelty of plot. It stands its best chance in a small arty theatre that caters to those who go in for something different in screen entertainment. The thick Scottish and British accents, in addition to the subtle comedy, make it unsuitable for the masses. There are a few situations that have general appeal and provoke hearty laughter. The most comical situation is that in which the home of the pompous Provost is overrun by dogs on the night he was dining a politically important lord. Intermingled with the comedy is a pleasant romance:—

Vivien Leigh returns to her home in Scotland to find her father, the Provost (Cecil Parker), embroiled in a political campaign. Rex Harrison, newspaper reporter sent to interview Parker, is eye-witness to a distasteful scene—that of Parker ejecting forcibly from his home a poor woman (Sara Allgood), who had tearfully pleaded with him to release her dog that had been sent to the pound because she could not pay for a license. Harrison, taking advantage of the editor's absence, prints in place of the interview a scathing article denouncing the Provost for his cruelty. This so arouses the populace that they cause a near riot when Parker tries to address them at a public meeting; they all bark at him. The affair has far-reaching effects, jeopardizing Parker's political chances. In order to stop Harrison, Parker brings an action against him for corrupt practices. Miss Leigh, who had fallen in love with Harrison, in order for her to avoid testifying against him, tells the Court that she was married to him. During a recess in the trial, she convinces her father that he was in error. He admits in open court that he had been inconsiderate, promising to change. The people, including Miss Allgood, cheer him, insuring his future political career, and Miss Leigh is united with Harrison.

The plot was adapted from the play by Bruno Frank. Ian Dalrymple wrote the screen play, he and Victor Saville directed it, and Alexander Korda produced it. In the cast are Ursula Jeans, Gus McNaughton, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### **"Her Jungle Love" with Dorothy Lamour and Ray Milland**

(Paramount, April 15; time, 80 min.)

Aside from the delightful antics of Jiggs, a chimpanzee, the only thing in favor of this picture is the beautiful outdoor technicolor photography. Its entertainment value is practically nil, for the story is ridiculous and trite, measuring up to the intelligence of seven year old children. Paramount probably thought this would be a good follow-up to "Jungle Princess." But it is just the opposite, for what might have seemed novel then becomes ridiculous by repetition. For instance, here again the heroine, a savage jungle girl, learns how to talk English practically overnight, and the hero, in the end, leaves civilization to live on the island with the jungle girl. For the most part, the supposed thrill scenes are nauseating, particularly the one in which a white man is thrown to the crocodiles. Other horrible scenes are those in which tribesmen are trapped during an earthquake and attacked by crocodiles:—

Ray Milland and Lynne Overman, aviators scouring the South Pacific for signs of a fellow aviator who had been lost, meet with trouble during a storm; they crash on an island. While Overman was exploring the island, Milland narrowly escapes when a knife is thrown at him. It had been thrown by a native girl. Eventually he wins her confidence and she takes him to her cave. J. Carrol Naish, a university bred Eurasian, who had left London because of his hatred for a white woman who had betrayed him, rules over a tribe of savages; his power lay in the fact that he could hypnotize Miss Lamour, making the natives believe she was a goddess. Without knowing that Milland and Overman were looking on, Naish goes through a ceremony during which the lost aviator, whom he had captured, is thrown to the crocodiles. When he returns the next day and finds Milland and Overman, he prepares to kill them in the same way. But they are interrupted by an earthquake, in which all the tribesmen, including Naish, are either killed or eaten by the crocodiles. Miss Lamour, Milland, and Overman escape; they are overjoyed to find that friends of theirs had come in a yacht to find and rescue them. They are taken aboard; but Miss Lamour, jealous of Milland's fiance, swims back to her island. She is overjoyed when Milland follows her.

Gerald Geraghty and Kurt Siodmak wrote the story, and Joseph Moncure March, Lillie Hayward and Eddie Welch, the screen play; George Archainbaud directed it and George M. Arthur produced it. In the cast are Dorothy Howe, Jonathan Hale, and others.

It should frighten sensitive children. Suitability, Class A.

### **"Tip-Off Girls" with Lloyd Nolan and Mary Carlisle**

(Paramount, April 1; time, 61 min.)

This program melodrama, although familiar in theme and development, should go over very well in houses that cater to the rougher type. The action is fast and exciting, and there is plentiful fighting and shooting, holding one in tense suspense throughout. Particularly thrilling are the closing scenes, where the villain finds out that the hero, supposedly a member of his hijacking gang, is really a G-Man. Thrilling are also the methods employed by the hero in outwitting the villain and his gang. A pleasant romance is worked into the plot, but it is of slight importance.

J. Carrol Naish, together with other owners of trucking concerns, calls on the District Attorney to ask for his help in stopping the hijacking that was going on. Unknown to the others, Naish was really the brains behind the hijackers. Lloyd Nolan and Roscoe Karns, two G-Men, by pretending to be hijackers, become connected with Naish's gang. When on several occasions the gang's attempts to hijack trucks are interrupted by G-Men, Naish becomes suspicious. He finds out Nolan's identity and tries to beat information out of him, but to no avail. Naish and his men plan a little surprise for the G-Men, who were arranging to blockade the road and round up the gang. Instead of filling a truck with merchandise, the gangsters hide in it, their scheme being to surprise the officers and kill them. But Nolan, who had escaped from Naish, arrives in time to prevent the scheme; instead he and the G-Men round up the gang. Miss Carlisle, Naish's secretary, who had been unaware of her employer's activities, is happy at Nolan's success, for she had fallen in love with him.

Maxwell Shane, Robert Yost, and Stuart Anthony wrote the original screen play; Louis King directed it. In the cast are Larry Crabbe, Anthony Quinn, Evelyn Brent, Benny Baker, and others.

Not for children. Good for adults. Class B.

### **"Bulldog Drummond's Peril" with John Barrymore, John Howard and Louise Campbell**

(Paramount, March 18; time, 65 min.)

This is the most exciting of the three "Bulldog Drummond" pictures so far produced. The production values are up to the standard set for this series; and the same players continue in the parts in which they were first assigned. As in the others, there is plentiful action, which, though not always believable, is exciting. There are chases, fights, and shooting; and intermingled with this is comedy and romance. The closing scenes where the hero rescues the heroine from the villain are thrilling. Howard, Denny, and Clive do most of the sleuthing this time, without much assistance from Barrymore, Scotland Yard Inspector, who refused to believe their stories about danger.

The action opens in a villa in Switzerland, where Howard and Miss Campbell had gone to be married. One of the guests (Matthew Boulton), a diamond dealer, marvels at a gift sent to the couple—a synthetic diamond, made in the laboratory of scientist Halliwell Hobbes. Boulton, realizing that such a discovery would revolutionize the diamond industry, orders his secretary to steal it; in doing so, he kills the detective guarding the gifts. He and Boulton then escape. When the theft and murder are discovered, Howard, in company with Clive and Denny, start out after the two men. He fears for Hobbes' safety, knowing that Boulton would stop at nothing to get rid of the formula. Howard sends a telegram to Barrymore, asking him to arrest Boulton, but Barrymore, thinking it to be a joke, disregards the message. Porter Hall, an envious scientist, becomes involved in the plot when he tries to get the diamond formula away from Hobbes, whom he had abducted and was holding prisoner; his motive was to blackmail Boulton, once he could get the formula. Miss Campbell, who had arrived in London in search of Howard, is trapped by Hall and held prisoner by him. Howard eventually overcomes Hall, rescues Hobbes and Miss Campbell, and turns the crooks over to Barrymore, who, having suddenly become interested in the case, had arrived in time to help out. Miss Campbell chides Howard for having missed their wedding date.

H. C. Sapper McNeile wrote the story, Stuart Palmer, the screen play, and James Hogan directed it. In the cast are Elizabeth Patterson, Nydia Westman, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Judge Hardy's Children" with Lewis Stone, Mickey Rooney and Cecilia Parker**

(MGM, March 25; time, 77 min.)

Good program family entertainment. It is a continuation of the Hardy family series (the last one was "You're Only Young Once"), with the same players portraying the different characters. The enjoyable thing about this series is the naturalness with which the story unfolds. Comedy is provoked by the actions of the members of the family, particularly by Mickey Rooney, who cannot resist pretty girls. His chief concern is getting a tuxedo, so as to be able to attend dances with young ladies. The situation that shows him dressed for the first time in the tuxedo, drinking in the admiration of his family, is delightful. There is human appeal in the relationship between the parents and their two children, for no matter what the children do to hurt them, their parents are willing to help them, regardless of what the sacrifice is. In this particular case, the naivete of Cecilia Parker, the daughter, brings embarrassment to her father, who had been called by the Government to Washington to head a Commission for investigating the activities of a monopolistic utility company. She had innocently passed on remarks that her father had made about the case to persons directly connected with the utility company. These persons had made records of what she had said, their purpose being to blackmail Stone into giving a decision in their favor. But Stone outwits them by announcing over the radio that his daughter had worked with him in giving out the information so as to befuddle those working against the government interests. In this way he is able to hand out an honest opinion against the utility company, and to save his daughter from disgrace. The family again is happy.

The story is based on the characters created by Aurania Rouverol; Kay Van Ripper wrote the screen play, and George B. Seitz directed it. In the cast are Fay Holden, Betty Ross Clark, Ann Rutherford, and others.

Suitability, Class A



## THE PRODUCERS HAD BETTER USE GOOD STORIES FOR MUSICALS

Mr. Howard Barnes, the eminent moving picture critic of the New York Herald Tribune, said partly thus in his column of Sunday, February 27:

"If the screen producers are wise, they will refrain from turning out new musicals until they have taken careful stock of a form which is forever eluding them. The mere fact that Hollywood, with its enormous resources, can generally out-Ziegfeld Ziegfeld, is no reason for them to think that they can go on selling the public short on collections of gags, songs and dances. The screen musical has gone through several weird sea-changes since the advent of sound suggested the possibilities of embellishing a script with hoofing and hot-cha. The present trend is far from promising.

"Unless I am mistaken, the current Hollywood musical show is a disreputable offspring of that defunct stage form known as vaudeville. We have had opera and revue, burlesque and straight musical comedy on the screen, but the present type of entertainment is too helter-skelter to fall into any of these classifications. No matter what it pretends to be, and it is usually full of pretensions, it is no more than a random assortment of variety turns, joined together for no better reason than that they follow one another through an hour or two of continuous presentation. If the headline acts are the sort to capture the public imagination, well and good for the box office. Even when they are, they rarely add up to satisfactory entertainment. . . ."

Mr. Barnes deserves the thanks of every exhibitor for calling the attention of the producers to this shortcoming of theirs. There have been produced lately several \$2,000,000 musical comedies, the stories of which are so inane that they should have never been used. The excuse for their adoption has been, no doubt, to serve the purpose Mr. Barnes says they have served—just to bind together a group of vaudeville sketches, some entertaining, some fairly so, and some mediocre.

When sound first came, the musical comedies and operettas flourished; all an exhibitor had to do was to tell the public that it was a musical, and the public would flock to his theatre to see it. But because of the fact that as little attention was paid to story values then as it is paid today, the public began losing interest in such type of moving pictures and after a while an exhibitor could not draw even a corporal's guard to the most expensive musical. That is exactly what is going to happen again unless the producers use interesting stories as a foundation.

The producers of musical pictures should have a heart when they set out to spend \$2,000,000 of their companies' money on a musical. They would not put up a \$100,000 building on a plan that is worthless, and yet they spend \$2,000,000 on a story that is worthless.

## BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 4

### Universal

"Some Blondes Are Dangerous," with Noah Beery, Jr., William Gargan, and Nan Grey, produced by E. M. Asher, and directed by Milton Carruth, from a screen play by Lester Cole: Fair.

"Courage of the West," with Bob Baker and Lois January, produced by Paul Malvern, and directed by Joseph H. Lewis, from a screen play by Norton S. Parker: Fair.

"Adventure's End," with John Wayne and Diana Gibson, produced by Trem Carr, and directed by Arthur Lubin, from a screen play by Ben Kohn: Fair.

"Prescription for Romance," with Wendy Barrie, Kent Taylor, and Mischa Auer, produced by Edmund Grainger, and directed by S. Sylvan Simon, from a screen play by James Mulhauser, Robert Shannon, and Albert R. Perkins: Fair.

"Sudden Bill Dorn," with Buck Jones and Noel Francis, produced by Buck Jones, and directed by Ray Taylor, from a screen play by Frances Guihan: Fair.

"You're a Sweetheart," with Alice Faye, George Murphy and Ken Murray, produced by B. G. DeSilva, and directed by David Butler, from a screen play by Monte Brice and Charles Grayson: Very Good-Good.

"The Spy Ring," with William Hall and Jane Wyman, produced by Paul Malvern, and directed by Joseph H. Lewis, from a screen play by George Waggner: Fair-Poor.

"The Jury's Secret," with Kent Taylor and Fay Wray, produced by Edmund Grainger, and directed by Ted Sloan, from a screen play by Lester Cole and Newman A. Levy: Fair.

"The Singing Outlaw," with Bob Baker and John Barclay, produced by Paul Malvern, and directed by Joseph H. Lewis, from a screen play by Harry O. Hoyt: Fair-Poor.

"The Black Doll," with Nan Grey and Donald Woods, produced by Irving Starr, and directed by Otis Garrett, from a screen play by Harold Buckley: Fair-Poor.

"The Midnight Intruder," with Louis Hayward, J. C. Nugent and Barbara Read, produced by Trem Carr, and directed by Arthur Lubin, from a screen play by Lester Cole: Good-Fair.

Twenty-five pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 9; Poor, 1.

The first 25 pictures of the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns, were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 9; Fair-Poor, 9.

### Warner Bros.

"Tovarich," with Claudette Colbert and Charles Boyer, produced by Robert Lord, and directed by Anatole Litvak. Jacques Deval wrote the original play and Robert E. Sherwood, the English version: Very Good-Good.

"Sergeant Murphy," with Ronald Reagan and Mary Maguire, produced by Bryan Foy, and directed by B. Reeves Eason, from a screen play by William Jacobs: Fair-Poor.

"The Invisible Menace," with Boris Karloff, produced by Bryan Foy, and directed by John Farrow, from a screen play by Crane Wilbur: Fair-Poor.

"Swing Your Lady," with Humphrey Bogart, Nat Pendleton, and Louise Fazenda, produced by Sam Bischoff, and directed by Ray Enright, from a screen play by Joseph Schrank and Maurice Leo: Good-Fair.

"Blondes at Work," with Glenda Farrell and Barton MacLane, produced by Bryan Foy, and directed by Frank McDonald, from a screen play by Albert DeMond: Fair-Poor.

"The Kid Comes Back," with Wayne Morris, June Travis and Barton MacLane, produced by Bryan Foy, and directed by B. Reeves Eason, from a screen play by George Bricker: Good-Fair.

"Penrod and His Twin Brother," with Billy and Bobby Mauch and Frank Craven, produced by Bryan Foy, and directed by William McGann, from a screen play by William Jacobs and Hugh Cummings: Good-Fair.

Fourteen pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Good-Fair, 5; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 4.

The first 14 pictures of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 1.

EDITOR'S NOTE: In reference to "The Kid Comes Back," one of the exhibitors who sent in his figures as to the box office performances of pictures has written on the blank the following:

"Very cheap production. Warner Bros. pictures are in general very cheap this year. We also suspect them of building two and even three pictures around one setting or atmosphere such as 'Mountain Justice' and 'White Bondage,' and 'San Quentin' and 'Alcatraz,' etc. Warners have slipped to the Independents class, insofar as production is concerned, and they refuse to reduce accordingly, but they'll pay for it on our deal for 1938-39."

Warner Bros. is not the only company that resorts to this practice: with the exception of MGM, and perhaps Twentieth Century-Fox, almost every other company resorts to it.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XX

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1938

No. 14

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There's Always a Woman—Blondell-Douglas...	Apr. 20
Extortion—Colton-Doran .....	Apr. 25
8204 Call of the Rockies—Starrett (54 min.)....	Apr. 30

## First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

270 She Loved a Fireman—Foran-Sheridan .....	Dec. 18
274 The Patient in Room 18—Knowles-Sheridan...	Jan. 8
253 Hollywood Hotel—Powell-Lane-Healy .....	Jan. 15
279 The Daredevil Drivers—Roberts-Purcell .....	Feb. 12
255 Gold Is Where You Find It—Brent-Rains....	Feb. 19
256 A Slight Case of Murder—Robinson-Bryan..	Mar. 5
252 Fools for Scandal—Lombard-Gravet.....	Apr. 16
261 Women Are Like That—Francis-O'Brien....	Apr. 23
267 Beloved Brat—Granville-D. Costello.....	Apr. 30

## Gaumont-British Features

(1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

## Beginning of 1937-38 Season

Non-Stop New York—Anna Lee-John Loder .....	Nov. 17
I Was a Spy—M. Carroll-H. Marshall (Reissue)..	Jan. 1
Look Out for Love—Neagle-Carmanati .....	Jan. 15
Wife of General Ling—Jones-Inkijioff .....	Feb. 1
The Girl Was Young—Nova Pilbeam .....	Feb. 15
To the Victor—Fyffe-Loder-Lockwood.....	Mar. 1
Sailing Along—Jessie Matthews .....	Mar. 15
Floating City No. 1 (F. P. 1.)—Reissue.....	Apr. 1
The Show Goes On—Neagle-Carmanati-Banks...	Apr. 15

## Grand National Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

299 Spirit of Youth—Joe Louis .....	Dec. 29
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## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

818 Paradise for Three—R. Young-Rice-Morgan...	Jan. 28
819 Everybody Sing—Garland-A. Jones-Owen...	Feb. 4
822 Of Human Hearts—Huston-Stewart .....	Feb. 11
823 A Yank at Oxford—Taylor-O'Sullivan .....	Feb. 18
824 Arsene Lupin Returns—Douglas-William .....	Feb. 25
825 Merrily We Live—C. Bennett-Aherne-Burke...	Mar. 4
826 The First Hundred Years (Wooden Wedding) —Montgomery-Bruce-William .....	Mar. 11
827 Girl of the Golden West—MacDonald-Eddy..	Mar. 18
828 Judge Hardy's Children—Stone-Parker .....	Mar. 25
829 Port of Seven Seas—Beery-O'Sullivan .....	Apr. 1
No release set for .....	Apr. 8
No release set for .....	Apr. 15
831 Test Pilot—Gable-Loy-S. Tracy .....	Apr. 22
830 Swiss Miss—Laurel-Hardy .....	Apr. 29



**Monogram Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3708	County Fair—J. Farrell MacDonald	Nov. 24
3731	Romance of the Rockies—Keene (53m.)	Dec. 15
3743	Boy of the Streets—Jackie Cooper (re.)	Dec. 22
3722	Telephone Operator—Allen-White (61m.)	Jan. 5
3727	West of Rainbow's End—McCoy (57m.) (r.)	Jan. 19
3724	Saleslady—Nagel-Heyburn	Feb. 2
3736	Where the West Begins—Randall (54m.)	Feb. 2
3719	My Old Kentucky Home—Venable-Hall	Feb. 16
3733	The Painted Trail—Tom Keene (50m.) (r.)	Feb. 23
3725	The Port of Missing Girls—Allen (re.)	Mar. 2
3728	Code of the Rangers—Tim McCoy	Mar. 9
3715	Rose of the Rio Grande—Movita-Carroll	Mar. 16
3739	Land of Fighting Men—Jack Randall	Mar. 30
3713	Female Fugitives—Venable-Reynolds	Apr. 6
3729	Renegade Law—Tim McCoy	Apr. 13

**Paramount Features**

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

3722	Daughter of Shanghai—Wong-Ahn (62m.)	Dec. 17
3723	True Confession—Lombard-MacMurray	Dec. 24
3724	Wells Fargo—McCrea-Dee-Burns	Dec. 31
3725	Bulldog Drummond's Revenge—Barrimore	Jan. 7
3726	Every Day's a Holiday—West-Lowe	Jan. 14
3727	Thrill of a Lifetime—Grable-Downs	Jan. 21
3755	Partners of the Plains—Wm. Boyd (70m.)	Jan. 28
3728	The Buccaneer—March-Tamiroff	Feb. 4
3729	Scandal Street—Ayres-Campbell	Feb. 11
3730	Big Broadcast of 1938—Fields-Raye (re.)	Feb. 18
3756	Cassidy of Bar 20—Boyd-Hayes (56½m.)	Feb. 25
3731	Romance in the Dark—Swarthout-Boles (r.)	Mar. 4
3732	Dangerous to Know—Tamiroff-Patrick	Mar. 11
3733	Bulldog Drummond's Peril—Howard	Mar. 18
3734	Bluebeard's Eighth Wife—Colbert-Cooper (reset)	Mar. 25
3735	Tip-Off Girls—Nolan-Carlisle-Naish	Apr. 1
	No release set for	Apr. 8
3736	Her Jungle Love—Lamour-Milland	Apr. 15
3757	Heart of Arizona—Wm. Boyd (67½m.)	Apr. 22
3737	College Swing—Burns-Allen-Raye-Hope	Apr. 29
	Stolen Heaven—Raymond-Bradna-Farrell	May 6
	Professor Beware—Harold Lloyd	May 13

**Republic Features**

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

**1936-37 Season**

6001	Portia on Trial—Inescort-Abel (re.)	Nov. 8
	(End of Season)	

**1937-38 Season**

7102	Old Barn Dance—Autry (60m.)	Jan. 29
7007	Outside of Paradise—Regan-McNulty	Feb. 7
7020	Born to Be Wild—Byrd-Weston-Bond	Feb. 16
7021	Hollywood Stadium Mystery—E. Venable	Feb. 21
7125	Thunder in the Desert—Steele (55m.)	Feb. 21
7008	Prison Nurse—Wilcoxon-Marsh	Mar. 1
7115	Call of the Mesquiteers—Three Mes. (56m.)	Mar. 7
	King of the Newsboys—Ayres-Mack	Mar. 18
	Arson Gang Busters—Livingston-Keith	Mar. 28
	Invisible Enemy—Marshall-Correll	Apr. 4
	Call of the Yukon—Arlen-Roberts	Apr. 11
7116	Outlaws of Sonora—Three Mesquiteers	Apr. 11
7126	The Feud Maker—Bob Steele	Apr. 18

**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

**1936-37 Season**

738	Damsel in Distress—Astaire-Fontaine	Nov. 19
739	Bringing Up Baby—Hepburn-Grant	Feb. 18
	(more to come)	

**1937-38 Season**

820	Double Danger—Foster-Bourne	Jan. 28
891	Snow White—Disney (For special release)	Feb. 4
823	Radio City Revels—Oakie-Miller-Berle	Feb. 11
821	Night Spot—Woodbury-Lane-Jones	Feb. 25
822	Maid's Night Out—Fontaine-Lane	Mar. 4
846	Hawaii Calls—Breen-Sparks	Mar. 11
813	Condemned Women—Eilers-Hayw'd-Shirley	Apr. 1
824	This Marriage Business—Moore-Lane	Apr. 8
826	Joy of Living—Dunne-Fairbanks	Apr. 15
827	Law of the Underworld—Morris-Shirley	May 6

**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

824	Borrowing Trouble—Prouty-Byington	Dec. 10
	No release set for	Dec. 17
831	Thank You, Mr. Moto—Lorre-Regan	Dec. 24
825	Love and Hisses—Winchell-Bernie-Simon	Dec. 31
833	City Girl—Brooks-Cortez-Wilcox	Jan. 7
823	Tarzan's Revenge—Morris-Holm	Jan. 7
829	Change of Heart (Headline Huntress)—Whalen-Stuart	Jan. 14
828	Hawaiian Buckaroo—Ballew-Knapp-Regas	Jan. 14
832	Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo—W. Oland	Jan. 21
830	Happy Landing—Henie-Ameche-Romero	Jan. 28
826	International Settlement—Del Rio-Sanders	Feb. 4
834	Checkers—Withers-Erwin-Merkel	Feb. 11
835	The Baroness and the Butler—W. Powell-Annabella	Feb. 18
873	County Chairman—Will Rogers reissue	Feb. 18
836	Love on a Budget—Prouty-Byington	Feb. 25
827	Sally, Irene and Mary—Faye-Martin	Mar. 4
838	Walking Down Broadway—Trevor-Brooks	Mar. 11
837	Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm—S. Temple	Mar. 18
841	(819) Mr. Moto's Gamble (Mr. Moto Takes a Chance)—Lorre-Luke-Baldwin	Mar. 25
839	Josette—Simon-Ameche-Young	Apr. 1
842	Rawhide—Ballew-Gehrig-Knapp	Apr. 8
840	In Old Chicago—Power-Faye-Ameche	Apr. 15
843	Island in the Sky—Stuart-Whalen-Kelly	Apr. 22
844	Kentucky Moonshine—Ritz Brothers-Martin	Apr. 29

**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

	Troopship (Farewell Again)—Banks-Robson	Oct. 8
	Stand-In—Howard-Blondell-Bogart	Oct. 29
	52nd Street—Baker-Paterson-Pitts-Carrillo	Nov. 19
	Nothing Sacred—Lombard-March-Connolly	Nov. 26
	Murder on Diamond Row—Lowe-Shaw	Dec. 10
	The Hurricane—Lamour-Hall-Astor	Dec. 24
	Action for Slander—Brook-Scott-Todd	Jan. 14
	I Met My Love Again—J. Bennett-Fonda	Jan. 28
	The Goldwyn Follies—Leeds-Menjou-Baker	Feb. 4
	Adventures of Tom Sawyer—Kelly-Robson	Feb. 11
	Storm in a Teacup—Leigh-Harrison	Feb. 25
	Adventures of Marco Polo—Cooper-Rathbone	Mar. 4
	The Gaiety Girls—J. Hulbert-P. Ellis	Mar. 18
	Divorce of Lady X—Oberon-Olivier (re.)	Apr. 15
	The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel—Stewart-Scott-Lister (reset)	Apr. 29

**Universal Features**

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

A2033	The Spy Ring—Hall-Wyman	Jan. 9
A2019	The Jury's Secret—Taylor-Wray	Jan. 16
A2055	The Singing Outlaw—Baker (56m.)	Jan. 23
A2014	The Black Doll—Grey-Woods	Jan. 30
A2016	The Midnight Intruder—Hayward-Read	Feb. 6
A2035	Forbidden Valley—Beery, Jr.-Robinson	Feb. 13
A2056	Border Wolves—Bob Baker (56m.)	Feb. 25
A2002	Mad About Music—Durbin-Marshall	Feb. 27
A2017	Crime of Dr. Hallett—Bellamy-Read	Mar. 11
A2029	State Police—William Hall (reset)	Mar. 18
A2041	Let's Make a Night of It (Night Club Hostess)—Rogers-Clyde (67m.) (re.)	Mar. 25
	Goodbye Broadway—Brady-Winninger	Mar. 25
	Reckless Living—Grey-Wilcox	Apr. 1
A2057	The Last Stand—Bob Baker	Apr. 1
	Nurse from Brooklyn—Eilers-Kelly	Apr. 15
	Lady in the Morgue—Foster-Eilers	Apr. 22

**Warner Bros. Features**

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

211	Swing Your Lady—Bogart-Pendleton-McHugh	Jan. 29
		Feb. 5
225	Blondes at Work—Farrell-MacLane	Feb. 12
214	The Kid Comes Back—Morris-Travis	Feb. 12
226	Penrod and His Twin Brother—Mauch Twins	Feb. 26
216	Love, Honor and Behave—Morris-P. Lane	Mar. 12
221	He Couldn't Say No—McHugh-Wyman	Mar. 19
204	Jezebel—Davis-Fonda-Brent-Lindsay	Mar. 26
212	Over the Wall—Foran-Travis-Litel	Apr. 2
222	Accidents Will Happen—Reagan-G. Blondell	Apr. 9



## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

8504	Bluebird's Baby—Color Rhap. (7m.)	Jan. 21
8804	Snow Foolin'—World of Sport (10m.)	Jan. 21
8756	Scrappy's Trip to Mars—Scrappys (6½m.)	Feb. 4
8856	Screen Snapshots No. 6—(9½m.)	Feb. 4
8655	Community Sing No. 5—(10m.)	Feb. 5
8702	Sad Little Guinea Pigs—K. Kat (6½m.)	Feb. 7
8505	The Horse on the Merry-Go-Round—Color Rhapsody (6½m.)	Feb. 17
8805	Feminine Fun—World of Sport (9½m.)	Feb. 18
8656	Community Sing No. 6—(10m.)	Feb. 25
8703	Auto Clinic—K. Kat	Mar. 4
8857	Screen Snapshots No. 7—(9½m.)	Mar. 4
8806	Unusual Hunting—World of Sport	Mar. 15
8657	Community Sing No. 7	Mar. 18
8506	The Foolish Bunny—Color Rhapsody	Mar. 26
8857	Screen Snapshots No. 8	Apr. 1
8807	Sport Stamina—World of Sport	Apr. 10
8704	Little Buckaroo—K. Kat	Apr. 11
8507	The Big Birdcast—Color Rhapsody	Apr. 14

### Columbia—Two Reels

8425	He Done His Duty—All star com. (17½ m.)	Dec. 10
8142	The Web Tangles—Pilot No. 2 (23½ m.)	Dec. 11
8143	Enemies of the Air—Pilot No. 3 (24½m.)	Dec. 18
8426	Man Bites Love Bug—All Star com. (18m.)	Dec. 24
8144	In the Name of the Law—Pilot No. 4 (25m.)	Dec. 25
8145	The Crackup—Pilot No. 5 (24½m.)	Jan. 1
8404	Termites of 1938—Stooges comedy (14½m.)	Jan. 7
8146	The Dark Hour—Pilot No. 6 (23m.)	Jan. 8
8147	Wings of Destiny—Pilot No. 7 (19½m.)	Jan. 15
8427	Fiddling Around—All Star com. (17½m.)	Jan. 21
8148	Battle in the Sky—Pilot No. 8 (23½m.)	Jan. 22
8149	The Great Flight—Pilot No. 9 (22m.)	Jan. 29
8428	A Doggone Mixup—All Star (18½m.)	Feb. 4
8150	Whirlpool of Death—Pilot No. 10 (23½m.)	Feb. 5
8151	The Haunted Mill—Pilot No. 11 (24½m.)	Feb. 12
8405	Wee Wee Monsieur—Stooges com. (17½m.)	Feb. 18
8152	The Lost Trail—Pilot No. 12 (23m.)	Feb. 19
8153	The Net Tightens—Pilot No. 13 (25½m.)	Feb. 26
8429	The Old Raid Mule—All Star com. (17½m.)	Mar. 4
8154	Vengeance Rides the Airways—Pilot No. 14 (21½ min.)	Mar. 5
8155	Retribution—Pilot No. 15	Mar. 12
8161	The Isle of Fear—Secret of Treasure Island No. 1	Mar. 17
8430	Time Out for Trouble—All Star (16½m.)	Mar. 18
8162	The Ghost Talks—Secret No. 2	Mar. 24
8431	Cuckoorancho—All Star comedy	Mar. 25
8406	Tassles in the Air—Stooge (17m.)	Apr. 1
8432	Jump Chump Jump—All Star com. (19½m.)	Apr. 15

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

#### 1936-37 Season

W-540	Pipe Dream—Happy Harmony (8m.)	Feb. 5
W-541	Little Bantamweight—Happy Har. (8m.)	Feb. 12

(End of Season)

#### 1937-38 Season

H-723	Captain Kidd's Treasure—Hist. My. (10m.)	Jan. 22
S-704	Jungle Juveniles No. 2—(9m.)	Jan. 29
M-673	Stroke of Genius—Miniatures (11m.)	Feb. 5
C-734	Canned Fishing—Our Gang (11m.)	Feb. 12
S-705	Three on a Rope—Pete Smith (10m.)	Feb. 19
T-657	Glimpses of Austria—Traveltalks (9m.)	Feb. 19
H-724	The Ship That Died—Hist. Myst. (10m.)	Feb. 19
W-681	Cleaning House—Cartoon (8m.)	Feb. 19
M-674	Life in Sometown, U.S.A.—Minia. (11m.)	Feb. 26
C-735	Bear Facts—Our Gang (11m.)	Mar. 5
M-675	An Optical Poem—Minia. (Tech.)	Mar. 5
S-706	La Savate—Pete Smith (8m.)	Mar. 12
T-658	Glimpses of New Brunswick—Trav. (8m.)	Mar. 19
F-753	How to Figure Income Tax—Bench. (8m.)	Mar. 19
C-736	Three Men in a Tub—Our Gang	Mar. 26
W-682	Blue Monday—Cartoon (9m.)	Apr. 2
S-707	Penny's Party—Pete Smith (Tech.) (9m.)	Apr. 9
C-737	Came the Brawn—Our Gang	Apr. 16
T-659	Beautiful Budapest—Traveltalks	Apr. 16

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

P-611	What Price Safety—Crime Doesn't Pay (21 min.)	Feb. 5
P-612	Miracle Money—Crime Doesn't Pay	Mar. 26

### Paramount—One Reel

L7-4	Unusual Occupations No. 4—(10m.)	Feb. 11
A7-9	Listen to Lucas—Headliner (9½m.)	Feb. 18
E7-7	Learn Politeness—Popeye (7m.)	Feb. 18
V7-8	Gold!—Paragraphics (9m.)	Feb. 25
R7-8	A Fascinating Adventure—Sport. (9½m.)	Feb. 25
T7-7	Be Up to Date—Betty Boop (6m.)	Feb. 25
C7-4	The Tears of an Onion—Color Clas. (7m.)	Feb. 25
P7-8	Paramount Pictorial No. 8—(9m.)	Mar. 4
A7-10	The Star Reporter No. 3—Head. (9½m.)	Mar. 11
E7-8	The House Builder—Upper—Popeye (6m.)	Mar. 18
J7-4	Popular Science No. 4—(10½m.)	Mar. 18
V7-9	Jungle Glimpses—Paragraphics	Mar. 25
R7-9	Cops and Robbers—Sportlight (9½m.)	Mar. 25
T7-8	Honest Love and True—Betty Boop (8m.)	Mar. 25
SC7-4	Thanks for the Memory—Screen Song	Mar. 25
P7-9	Paramount Pictorial No. 9—(9½m.)	Apr. 1
A7-11	Hall's Holiday—Headliner (9½m.)	Apr. 8
E7-9	Big Chief Ugh-Amugh-Ugh—Popeye	Apr. 15
L7-5	Unusual Occupations No. 5	Apr. 15

### RKO—One Reel

84202	Phoney Boy—Nu Atlas Musical (11m.)	Oct. 15
84602	Pathe Parade—(11m.)	Nov. 5
84103	The Old Mill—Disney cart. (9m.)	Nov. 5
84402	Murder in Swing Time—Condor (10m.)	Nov. 19
84403	Prairie Swinger—Musical (10m.)	Nov. 19
84203	Sweet Shoe—Nu Atlas Musical (11m.)	Nov. 26
84104	Pluto's Quinuplets—Disney (8½m.)	Nov. 26
84204	Deviled Ham—Nu Atlas (10m.)	Dec. 3
84105	Donald's Ostrich—Disney cart. (9m.)	Dec. 10
84106	Lonesome Ghosts—Disney cart. (9m.)	Dec. 24
84603	Pathe Parade—(10m.)	Jan. 14
84205	A Radio Hook-Up—Nu Atlas (10m.)	Jan. 28
84301	White Magic—Sportsopes (10m.)	Jan. 28
84107	Self Control—Disney cart. (9m.)	Feb. 11
84206	Latin Rhythm—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Feb. 18
84302	In the Swim—Sportsopes (10m.)	Feb. 18
84108	Boat Builders—Disney cart. (7m.)	Feb. 25
84604	Pathe Parade—(10m.)	Feb. 25
84109	Donald's Better Self—Disney (8m.)	Mar. 11
84207	No Sale—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Mar. 11
84303	Windward Way—Sportsopes (10m.)	Mar. 11
84110	Moth and the Flame—Disney (8m.)	Apr. 1
84208	Skyline Revue—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Apr. 1
84304	Swinging Mallets—Sportsopes (10m.)	Apr. 1
84111	Donald's Nephews—Disney (8m.)	Apr. 15
84209	Maid and Music—Nu Atlas	Apr. 22
84605	Pathe Parade—(11m.)	Apr. 22

### RKO—Two Reels

83107	March of Time—(19m.)	Feb. 18
83801	Quintupland—Special (19m.)	Feb. 18
83202	The Stupor-Visor—Radio Flash. (17m.)	Feb. 25
83704	His Pest Friend—Leon Errol (18m.)	Mar. 14
83108	March of Time—(19m.)	Mar. 18
83404	False Roomers—Edgar Kennedy (17m.)	Mar. 25
83502	Twenty Girls and a Band—Stuart (18m.)	Apr. 8
83109	March of Time	Apr. 15
83302	A Buckaroo Broadcast—Whitney	Apr. 22
83705	Berth Quakes—Errol (16m.)	May 6
83110	March of Time	May 13
83405	Kennedy's Castle—E. Kennedy (17m.)	May 28

### Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

8513	His Off Day—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Feb. 4
8606	Songbirds of the North Woods—T. Chest (10 min.)	Feb. 11
8514	Just Ask Jupiter—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Feb. 18
8910	All's Fair—Song Hit (10m.)	Feb. 25
8607	Sky Fishing—Treasure Chest (9½m.)	Feb. 25
8515	Gandy the Goose—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Mar. 4
8516	Happy and Lucky—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Mar. 18
8610	Music from the Stars—Treasure Chest	Mar. 25
8517	A Mountain Romance—Terry-T. (6½m.)	Apr. 1
8608	Return of the Buffalo—Treasure Chest	Apr. 8
8518	Robinson Crusoe's Broadcast—T.-T. (6½m.)	Apr. 15
8604	Kingdom for a Horse—Treasure Chest	Apr. 22
8519	Maid in China—Terry-Toon	Apr. 29

### Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

8303	Uncle Sol Solves It—Mirthquake (15½m.)	Feb. 11
8116	Wanna Be a Model?—Machamer (16½m.)	Feb. 25
8308	Love and Onions—Timberg-Rooney (19½m)	Mar. 11
8117	Beautiful But Dummies—West-Patricola	Mar. 25
8309	Sing for Sweetie—Lee Sullivan	Apr. 15
8118	Not Yet Titled—Jefferson Machamer	Apr. 29



**Universal—One Reel**

A2390 Stranger Than Fiction No. 46—(9m.)....Feb. 21  
 A2279 Yokel Boy Makes Good—Oswald (7m.) ...Feb. 21  
 A2377 Going Places with Thomas No. 46—(9m.)..Feb. 28  
 A2280 Trade Mice—Oswald (7m.) .....Feb. 28  
 A2391 Stranger Than Fiction No. 47—(9m.) ....Mar. 14  
 A2281 Feed the Kitty—Oswald cart. (7m.) .....Mar. 14  
 A2378 Going Places with Tho's No. 47—(9½m.)..Mar. 21  
 A2392 Stranger Than Fiction No. 48—(8½m.)...Apr. 4  
 A2379 Going Places with Thomas No. 48—(9m.)..Apr. 11  
 A2393 Stranger Than Fiction No. 49—(8½m.)...Apr. 18  
 A2380 Going Places with Thomas No. 49.....Apr. 25

**Universal—Two Reels**

A2167 Down on the Barn—Mentone (17m.).....Feb. 23  
 A2160 Breathless Moments—Special (19m.) ....Feb. 28  
 A2890 A Race for Fortune—Tyler No. 10 (21m.)..Feb. 28  
 A2891 No Man's Land—Tyler No. 11 (20m.) ....Mar. 7  
 A2892 The Kimberly Diamonds—Tyler No. 12  
 (21 min.) .....Mar. 15  
 A2581 New Worlds to Conquer—Flash Gordon's  
 Trip to Mars No. 1 (20 min.) .....Mar. 22  
 A2168 Somewhere in Paris—Mentone (17m.) ...Mar. 23  
 A2582 The Living Dead—Flash No. 2 (20m.)....Mar. 29  
 A2583 Queen of Magic—Flash No. 3 (21½m.) ...Apr. 5  
 A2584 Ancient Enemies—Flash No. 4 (19m.) ....Apr. 12  
 A2585 The Boomerang—Flash No. 5 (19½m.)...Apr. 19  
 A2586 Tree-Men of Mars—Flash No. 6 (20m.) ..Apr. 26  
 Latin Hi-Hattin'—Mentone .....Apr. 27

**Vitaphone—One Reel**

3504 Land of the Kangaroo—Color-Tour (10½m.) Dec. 18  
 3304 Alibi Mark—True Adventures (13 m.).....Dec. 25  
 3706 Henry King and Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.)..Dec. 25  
 3205 Two Boobs in a Balloon—Bergen re. (10m.)..Jan. 1  
 3406 Daffy Duck and Egghead—Mer. Mel. (7½.)..Jan. 1  
 3505 India's Millions—Color-Tour (10m.) .....Jan. 8  
 3805 Ice Cream-Jockeys—Negligees—Pic. (10m.)..Jan. 8  
 3905 Unreal Newsreel—Varieties (9m.) .....Jan. 8  
 3206 Free and Easy—Bergen reissue (10m.) ....Jan. 15  
 3709 Leon Navarro & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.)..Jan. 15  
 3605 Porky's Poppa—Looney Tunes (7m.) .....Jan. 15  
 3908 Ski Flight—Varieties (10m.) .....Jan. 22  
 3305 The Bolted Door—True Adv. (13m.) .....Jan. 22  
 3407 My Little Buckaroo—Mer. Mel. (7½m.) ....Jan. 29  
 3708 Enric Madriguera & Orch.—Mel. M. (10m.)..Jan. 29  
 3507 Malayan Jungles—Color-Tour (10m.) .....Feb. 5  
 3606 Porky at the Crocadero—L. Tunes (7½m.)..Feb. 5  
 3806 Kellogg Ranch-Hockey-Shoes—Pict. (10m.)..Feb. 5  
 3710 Carl Hoff & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10m.) ....Feb. 12  
 3906 Alibi Time—Varieties (11m.) .....Feb. 12  
 3306 Hit and Run—True Adventures (13m.) ....Feb. 19  
 3408 Jungle Jitters—Mer. Melodies (7m.) .....Feb. 19  
 3607 What Price Porky—L. Tunes (7½m.) .....Feb. 26  
 3807 Dogs-Billiards-Lithography—Pict. (10m.) ..Mar. 5  
 3707 Benny Meroff & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.) ..Mar. 5  
 3409 Sneezing Weasel—Mer. Melodies (7m.) ....Mar. 12  
 3502 What the World Makes—Color-Tour (10m) Mar. 12  
 3907 Vitaphone Gambols—Varieties (10½m.) ...Mar. 19  
 3307 Shopgirl's Evidence—True Adv. (12½m.)..Mar. 19  
 3608 Porky's Phoney Express—L. Tunes (7m.)..Mar. 19  
 3711 Mike Riley & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10m.) ....Mar. 26  
 3808 Song Writers-Bowling-Rubber—Pict. (10m) Apr. 2  
 3508 Crossroads of the Orient—Color-T. (10m.)..Apr. 2  
 3410 A Star Is Hatched—Mer. Mel. (8m.) .....Apr. 2  
 3909 The Crawford—Varieties (9½m.) .....Apr. 9  
 3609 Porky's Five and Ten—L. Tunes (7m.) ....Apr. 16  
 3712 Rubinoff & His Violin—Mel. Mast. ....Apr. 16  
 3308 Not Yet Titled—True Adventures .....Apr. 16  
 3809 Silverware-Ice Btg.-Trains—Pictorial .....Apr. 30  
 3713 Carl "Deacon" Moore & Orch.—Mel. Mast...May 7

**Vitaphone—Two Reels**

3014 Here's Your Hat—Revues (21m.) .....Dec. 11  
 3026 One on the House—Gay-Eties (20m.) .....Dec. 18  
 3021 Wedding Yells—Murray-Oswald (21m.) ...Jan. 1  
 3009 Script Girl—Headliners (21m.) .....Jan. 15  
 3003 Romance Road—Tech. Prod. (19m.) .....Jan. 29  
 3015 The Candid Kid—Revues (20m.) .....Feb. 12  
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 3010 Little Me—Wini Shaw (22m.) .....Mar. 5  
 3005 Romance of Louisiana—Tech. (18m.) .....Mar. 12  
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 3016 Got a Match—Revues.....Apr. 9  
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 3011 Forget Me Knots—Claire (Tech.) .....May 7  
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**NEWSWEEKLY  
NEW YORK  
RELEASE DATES****Universal**

654 Saturday ....Apr. 2  
 655 Wednesday ..Apr. 6  
 656 Saturday ....Apr. 9  
 657 Wednesday ..Apr. 13  
 658 Saturday ....Apr. 16  
 659 Wednesday ..Apr. 20  
 660 Saturday ....Apr. 23  
 661 Wednesday ..Apr. 27  
 662 Saturday ....Apr. 30  
 663 Wednesday ..May 4  
 664 Saturday ....May 7  
 665 Wednesday ..May 11  
 666 Saturday ....May 14  
 667 Wednesday ..May 18

**Fox Movietone**

58 Saturday .....Apr. 2  
 59 Wednesday ...Apr. 6  
 60 Saturday .....Apr. 9  
 61 Wednesday ...Apr. 13  
 62 Saturday .....Apr. 16  
 63 Wednesday ...Apr. 20  
 64 Saturday .....Apr. 23  
 65 Wednesday ...Apr. 27  
 66 Saturday .....Apr. 30  
 67 Wednesday ..May 4  
 68 Saturday ....May 7  
 69 Wednesday ..May 11  
 70 Saturday ....May 14  
 71 Wednesday ..May 18

**Paramount News**

69 Saturday .....Apr. 2  
 70 Wednesday ...Apr. 6  
 71 Saturday .....Apr. 9  
 72 Wednesday ...Apr. 13  
 73 Saturday .....Apr. 16  
 74 Wednesday ...Apr. 20  
 75 Saturday .....Apr. 23  
 76 Wednesday ...Apr. 27  
 77 Saturday .....Apr. 30  
 78 Wednesday ..May 4  
 79 Saturday ....May 7  
 80 Wednesday ..May 11  
 81 Saturday ....May 14  
 82 Wednesday ..May 18

**Metrotone News**

250 Saturday ...Mar. 12  
 251 Wednesday ..Mar. 16  
 252 Saturday ...Mar. 19  
 253 Wednesday ..Mar. 23  
 255 Wednesday ..Mar. 30  
 256 Saturday ....Apr. 2  
 257 Wednesday ..Apr. 6  
 258 Saturday ....Apr. 9  
 259 Wednesday ..Apr. 13  
 260 Saturday ....Apr. 16  
 261 Wednesday ..Apr. 20  
 262 Saturday ....Apr. 23  
 263 Wednesday ..Apr. 27  
 264 Saturday ....Apr. 30  
 265 Wednesday ..May 4  
 266 Saturday ....May 7  
 267 Wednesday ..May 11  
 268 Saturday ....May 14  
 269 Wednesday ..May 18

**Pathe News**

85173 Sat. (O.)...Apr. 2  
 85274 Wed. (E.) Apr. 6  
 85175 Sat. (O.)...Apr. 9  
 85276 Wed. (E.) Apr. 13  
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 85278 Wed. (E.) Apr. 20  
 85179 Sat. (O.)...Apr. 23  
 85280 Wed. (E.) Apr. 27  
 85181 Sat. (O.)...Apr. 30  
 85282 Wed. (E.) May 4  
 85183 Sat. (O.) May 7  
 85284 Wed. (E.) May 11  
 85185 Sat. (O.) May 14  
 85286 Wed. (E.) May 18



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No. 15

## LET THE RECORD SPEAK FOR ITSELF!

Sidney R. Kent, evidently irked by Abram F. Myers' bulletin of March 16, wrote to Mr. Myers a long letter in an effort to prove to him that, what he, Mr. Kent, had said to Congressman Pettengill at the House Committee's hearing of the Pettengill Bill against block booking is not inconsistent with what he said in his circular letter to fourteen thousand theatres, or with his present attitude towards the Neely Bill, which is similar to the Pettengill Bill.

Let us make a comparison of his statements to see whether there is any inconsistency or not:

In his letter to the exhibitors, Mr. Kent said:

"There are thousands of independent exhibitors who can never maintain their present position by buying their pictures one at a time, as I say they will be forced under this Act." In other words, he said to the exhibitors that, with the Neely-Pettengill Bill a law, the exhibitor will not be able to buy more than one picture at a time; he will be "forced" to do so under this Act.

In his testimony before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, he said:

"I say, if you legislate and say to me, 'Mr. Kent, hereafter you must only sell your pictures after they are made, because we want to protect the morals of the community,' and 'you can only sell your pictures after they are finished,' I say fine, but do not let the man who buys the product have any advantage over me. Let him also buy the product after it is finished so that he cannot have an alibi then and we can sell each one on merit. That is all right with me."

In other words, at that time he believed that the exhibitor could buy more than one picture at a time; and since the language of the present Bill is no different from the language of the Bill at that time, Mr. Myers is fully justified in calling Mr. Kent's present views inconsistent with the views he held of the Bill at the time he was testifying before the Committee.

In his letter to the exhibitors, Mr. Kent said also: "Actually the Bill itself will make any sale impossible except the sale of a finished picture after screening. . . . Where is the future selling to be done? In the exchanges I tell you. And what can be sold under this Bill? Nothing but finished product," warning the exhibitors that they will "rue" the day when the Neely Bill, which will bring such a condition about, becomes a law. But in his testimony before the Committee, he did not think that the exhibitors would "rue" such a day, for he said that it would be satisfactory to

him if the Pettengill Bill were so altered as to make the purchase of pictures before completion impossible. Are such views consistent?

But what more than anything else makes Mr. Kent's present views inconsistent with the views he held formerly is the fact that, as disclosed in the March 26 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, he is the first industry leader to have advocated the elimination of block booking and blind selling. In the spring of 1923 he must have felt that he was right when he told the exhibitors of the nation, not with these words but with this meaning: "Gentlemen, hereafter you will be under no obligation to buy the Paramount pictures 'sight unseen,' and in a block; see them first at the key-city theatres, where we have made arrangements to show them, and choose the pictures you want to buy; we will then tell you how much we are going to charge you for them. It is our desire to charge you just what each picture is worth, and no more, but neither less."

In his letter to Mr. Myers, Mr. Kent, by using all kinds of arguments, tries to prove that his testimony before the Committee is not inconsistent with his present views, but nothing that he says can convince any intelligent person that his present views are not inconsistent with his former views, for the record speaks for itself.

Mr. Kent has, of course, the right to change his views, but he should not object to it when the change is called to his attention.

## CAN IT BE DONE?

Taking my cue from Wilkerson's editorial in the February 12 issue of *The Hollywood Reporter*, which editorial dealt with the low spirits of the producers there as a result of the depression, I wrote an editorial in the February 19 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS suggesting that, because the quality of moving pictures has suffered as a result of the despondency of those connected with the production of pictures, the 35% picture must go.

Billy Wilkerson did not like those observations of mine and in an editorial in his paper, published in the February 23 issue, took me to task for reading in his editorial meanings that were not, as he says, contained in it.

After praising the quality of the pictures Hollywood is producing, he said: "Not only were they the finest, but they were the most expensive ever made. Producers and their distributors velled for the higher percentage brackets because their product merited it, and Mr. Harrison's bleat for no more 35% pictures (if any one pays attention to his bleat) is an unjustified request and, based on this column of February 12, is downright silly."

(Continued on last page)



### "Goodbye Broadway" with Alice Brady and Charles Winninger

(Universal, March 25; time, 69 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare. Alice Brady and Charles Winninger give good performances, trying hard to put some life into the picture, but there is not much that they can do with the trite material. The action, which is concentrated mostly in a small-town hotel lobby, lacks speed; it is only towards the end that a flurry of excitement is created. And even this is brought about by an obvious and ordinary situation. The romantic interest is mild:—

Miss Brady and her husband (Winninger), vaudeville troupers for many years, while playing a theatre in a small Connecticut town, take lodgings at a rundown hotel. Winninger, annoyed by the insults of the room clerk, buys the hotel for \$4,000; with his remaining \$1,000 he is compelled to pay off part of the bills the conniving owner had left. Miss Brady is disgusted, for she had looked forward to leaving the stage so as to buy a chicken farm with their savings, to settle down on it. To add to their troubles, actors and actresses arrive at the hotel, not as customers, but as guests. Miss Brady is excited when the hotel's only paying guest tells her that the old pieces of furniture in the basement were valuable antiques. Jed Prouty, a sly real estate dealer, who had been interested in buying the hotel because of a bill that was pending to make it a government memorial site, offers Miss Brady \$20,000 for it. But she, thinking he knew about the antiques, refuses to take it. Prouty plans to buy up the notes that were outstanding and force them out of the hotel. But when he hears about the antiques, he rushes back to the hotel, and offers \$10,000, which Miss Brady is happy to accept, for she, in the meantime, had found out that the furniture was just junk. Prouty collapses when he learns that the bill had fallen through and that the man who had told him about the antiques was a lunatic. But Winninger and Miss Brady, secure with their new found wealth, prepare to go back to vaudeville.

The plot was adapted from the play by James A. Gleason; Ray Chanslor and A. Dorian Otvos wrote the screen play, Ray McCarey directed it, and Edmund Grainger produced it. In the cast are Tom Brown, Dorothea Kent, Tommy Riggs, Frank Jenks, Willie Best, and others.

Morally suitable. Class A.

### "Fools for Scandal" with Carole Lombard and Fernand Gravet

(First National, April 16; time, 79 min.)

Disappointing! The story is thin, the comedy labored, and the action slow. The picture lacks novelty of plot and dialogue, depending on trite situations for its comedy; at no time does the action provoke real hearty laughter. Thus a lavish production and the talents of two capable stars have been wasted. Miss Lombard, usually so adept at comedy parts, can do nothing with this story material; as a matter of fact she has to resort to shouting to cover up the absurdity of some of the situations. The romance is developed in a routine way:—

Miss Lombard, an American screen star, while on a visit to Paris, accidentally becomes acquainted with Gravet, an impoverished Marquis; she does not know of his title. He falls madly in love with her and, despite his financial difficulties, is determined to marry her. When she leaves for London, he follows her, arriving at her home the night she was giving a party. He displays talent as a cook, to the delight of Miss Lombard and her guests. But the cook resents his butting into her domain, and resigns. That was just what Gravet wanted, for he had decided to become Miss Lombard's cook. This creates a scandal, for every one believed they were lovers and were using the cook idea just as a gag. Ralph Bellamy, Miss Lombard's wealthy but prosaic fiance, is enraged at the turn of events, and quarrels with her. Miss Lombard admits her love for Gravet, but tells him she could not marry him because he did not earn enough money. Incensed, Gravet lets her know about his title, and then leaves. She rushes after him in the London fog, dressed only in pajamas, finally catching up to him. He pulls her inside a doorway and they grope their way through a dark room. Just as they were embracing, the lights suddenly go on and they find themselves on a stage, in full view of an audience.

Nancy Hamilton, James Shute and Rosemary Casey wrote the story, and Herbert Fields and Joseph Fields, the screen play; Mervyn LeRoy directed it and produced it. In the cast are Allen Jenkins, Isabel Jeans, and others.

It is doubtful if the children will understand the sex insinuations; therefore, morally suitable for all. Suitability, Class A.

### "This Marriage Business" with Victor Moore, Allan Lane and Vicki Lester

(RKO, April 8; time, 71 min.)

This program comedy-melodrama is good entertainment for neighborhood theatres, with an appeal particularly to those who like stories in which the action takes place in a small town. It does not, however, overlook the action fans, for, once the crooked politicians enter the story, there is plentiful action. Victor Moore, the town's marriage license clerk, gives a delightful performance, winning one's sympathy by his simplicity in action and speech. The situation in which he plays up to Kay Sutton, who, as he knew, was trying to frame him, should provoke laughter. The closing scenes hold one in suspense, ending in a fairly exciting way. The romance, though routine, is pleasant:—

Allan Lane, a newspaper reporter, and Jack Carson, his cameraman, follow an eloping couple to a small town, where they had gone to be married. After acting as a witness at the ceremony, Lane starts talking to Moore, who tells him that no couple that had obtained a license from him had ever been divorced. Lane hits upon the idea of publicizing Moore in his newspaper. This brings prosperity to the town, for couples rush to Moore for their licenses, hoping it would bring them luck. The leading business men of the town urge Moore to run as Mayor against crooked Frank Thomas, who was just a henchman for gangster Richard Lane. Afraid of Moore's popularity, Thomas decides to frame him. But Allan Lane, wise to their motives, tells Moore just what to do; however, something they had not bargained for happens—Richard Lane kills a man and then makes it appear as if Moore had committed the murder. Allan Lane, by following a clue, is able to prove Richard Lane's guilt. Moore, released from prison, looks forward to his election as Mayor. He is happy to know that Allan Lane and his daughter (Vicki Lester) had fallen in love with each other.

Mel Riddle and Alex Ruben wrote the story, and Gladys Atwater and J. Robert Bren, the screen play; Christy Cabanne directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Cecil Kellaway, Paul Guilfoyle, and others.

The murder makes it unsuitable for children. Harmless for adults. Class B.

### "Rose of the Rio Grande" with John Carroll and Movita

(Monogram, March 16; time, 60 min.)

This melodrama, centering around Mexican banditry and rebellion one hundred years ago, is pretty good entertainment. It has action, and holds one in suspense until the end. The musical interpolations are a welcome addition because of the excellent singing voice of John Carroll (hero); and Movita, too, sings a few numbers effectively. Although a little slow in getting started, it becomes fairly exciting once the hero enters the villain's headquarters, bent on avenging the murder of his father and mother, aristocrats. The romance is pleasant:—

When Carroll returns to Mexico from Spain and finds the land ruled by a peon bandit Rebel Army, that had killed most of the aristocrats, including his own father and mother, he forms a band of brave aristocrats to wipe out the bandit menace. Since he went under an assumed name, the bandits did not know his identity. He and his men rescue Don Alvarado, a young aristocrat. Alvarado, grateful for what Carroll had done, joins the band, and informs him of the hardships his family had suffered, and of the fact that his sister (Movita) was cared for by servants, who were trying to get her across the border. Carroll and his men waylay the Inspector General of the Rebel Army and his staff. Carroll, dressed in the uniform of the General, goes to the Rebel Army headquarters, presided over by Antonio Moreno, a cruel petty officer. Moreno, not knowing who Carroll really was, treats him with deference, giving him all the information he needed. In the meantime, Carroll meets and falls in love with Movita, as she does with him; but thinking that he was her hated enemy she treats him with disdain. Carroll eventually reveals his identity to Moreno, and, forcing him into a duel, kills him. His men then wipe out the rebel army, and peace is once more restored in Mexico. Movita is overjoyed when she learns who Carroll really was; she then confesses her love for him.

Johnston McCulley wrote the story, and Ralph Bettinson, the screen play; William Nigh directed it, and Dorothy Reid produced it. In the cast are Lina Basquette, Duncan Renaldo, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



# **"King of the Newsboys" with Lew Ayres and Helen Mack**

(Republic, March 18; time, 68 min.)

Although the performances by Lew Ayres and Helen Mack are good, this is just a fair drama. The chief fault lies in the characterization of the heroine, whose actions should displease the average audience. The idea of a young girl's giving up the young man she loved to live with another man who could offer her luxuries is unpleasant, to say the least. The fact that she lived in the slums and that the hero was poor does not condone such an act; and since one is not in sympathy with her one loses interest in the outcome. Of course, she eventually sees the error of her way and changes her mode of living, but it is too late to win over the audience. One feels sympathy for the hero, who suffers because of her actions. In addition, the story is highly exaggerated in some instances:—

Lew Ayres and Helen Mack, both residents in the slum district, are in love. But Miss Mack, disgusted at Ayres' inability to get a steady position, breaks their engagement; she becomes intimate with Victor Varconi, wealthy publisher of horse-racing sheets, who could give her the luxuries she craved. Ayres, heartbroken, is determined to make good. And he does: in a short time he develops a powerful newspaper-distributing route. He and Miss Mack meet at the race track, and the old love flares up again. She leaves Varconi to go back to Ayres. But Ayres is not happy, for he is constantly aware of the other man in her life. So when he meets Sheila Bromley, wealthy society play-girl, he starts going out with her, spending money lavishly. But when he proposes to her, and his proposal is rejected, he sees the stupidity of his ways. Besides having spent money on amusement, he had lost a fortune in a vain attempt to ruin Varconi; and so he is poor once again. Miss Mack, learning that Varconi was trying to ruin Miss Bromley's father, forces him, at the point of a gun, to turn over to her the i.o.u.'s he was holding. Ayres, rushing to her side, prevents her from doing anything rash. He pleads for forgiveness and begs her to marry him; she tearfully accepts.

Samuel Ornitz and Horace McCoy wrote the story, and Louis Weitzenkorn and Peggy Thompson, the screen play; Bernard Vorhaus directed and produced it. In the cast are Alison Skipworth, Alice White, and others.

Unsuitable for children and adolescents. Class B.

# **"Making the Headlines" with Jack Holt, Craig Reynolds and Beverly Roberts**

(Columbia, March 10; time, 65 min.)

This comedy-melodrama belongs in the lower bracket of Class "B" entertainment, for the story does not make much sense. Whatever excitement the melodramatic action may create is rendered ineffectual by the silly comic interpolations, and by the actions of a few scatter-brained characters. It is only in the closing scenes that one is held in suspense—there the murderer is trapped. The romance is pleasant, but unimportant:—

Because of the newspaper publicity Jack Holt, a policeman, had been receiving for his daring capture of crooks, his chief, who wanted him out of the way, decides to "promote" him to a Captain's job in the sticks. Holt's pal (Craig Reynolds), a newspaper reporter, by leading his editor to believe that Holt's transfer meant something important, induces him to send him to Holt's station. Since nothing happens, Reynolds decides to take matters into his own hands. He steals a diamond necklace from Beverly Roberts, with whom he was in love, so as to stir up excitement. But Holt, knowing what he had done, orders him to give it back. Before Reynolds could do so, the necklace is stolen from him. The importance of the necklace is discovered when the will of Miss Roberts' deceased eccentric millionaire uncle is read—the necklace was the key to the whereabouts of the fortune he had bequeathed to Miss Roberts. In the search for the necklace, two persons are murdered. Holt eventually clears matters up by proving that John Wray had committed the murders in an effort to get the fortune for himself. With the case cleared up, Miss Roberts and Reynolds decide to marry.

Howard J. Green wrote the story, and he and Jefferson Parker, the screen play; Lewis D. Collins directed it, and Larry Darmour produced it. In the cast are Marjorie Gateison, Dorothy Appleby, Gilbert Emery, and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.

# **"Sailing Along" with Jessie Matthews**

(Gaumont-British, March 15; time, 86 min.)

Jessie Matthews' charm and personality overcome the triteness of the story. Where she is popular, it should go over well, for she gives a good performance, singing and dancing in her usual talented style. And she is supported by a cast of competent players. The production is lavish, particularly in the settings used for the interior of Roland Young's home, and Miss Matthews' costumes are styled better than in her last few pictures. The fault lies mainly in the story, which lacks novelty and is occasionally forced for laughs. In one situation, the conversation between Miss Matthews and Young's sister is rather risqué, even though the producers try to pass it off as comedy:—

Young, an eccentric millionaire, while out fishing, notices Miss Matthews, a barge girl, singing and dancing. He is so struck with her beauty and talent that he urges her to leave the barge to go on the stage. Her foster father and his son (Barry Mackay) object, but she is determined to show them she could make good. Young introduces her to Jack Whiting, popular musical comedy star. Whiting's first impression of her is poor, but later he changes his mind, and decides to put on a show starring her and himself. Whiting, although married, falls in love with her; but she is torn between her high regard for him and her feelings for Mackay. Mackay, in the meantime, backed by Young, makes a fortune for himself. Miss Matthews is acclaimed on the opening night, and is assured of great success. But she gives up everything to rush after Mackay, who, as she had heard, was planning to leave on his yacht.

Selwyn Jepson wrote the story, and Lesser Samuels, the screen play; Sonnie Hale directed it. In the cast are Noel Madison, Margaret Vyner, Athene Seyler, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

# **"Mr. Moto's Gamble" with Peter Lorre**

(20th Century-Fox, March 25; time, 71 min.)

This is the best of the Moto series. It is a fast-moving, exciting murder-mystery melodrama, holding one's attention to the very end. Since some of the action takes place at a prizefighting auditorium, the boxing events are in order and add to the picture's thrills. The comedy is unusually good; it is provoked by two embryonic detectives—Charlie Chan's son (Keye Luke), who had decided to give up art for detective work, and by Maxie Rosenbloom, a kleptomaniac with a poor memory, who wanted to become a detective so that he might be able to discover for himself from whom he had stolen the different articles. There is no doubt that murder mystery fans will be highly entertained by this, for the story is worked out in a logical and interesting way. The weakest part of the story is the development of the romance, which is left hanging more or less in the air:—

Peter Lorre, an instructor in crime detection, in company with one of his pupils (Keye Luke), and with police lieutenant Harold Huber, goes to a prizefight. Noticing the peculiar betting going on by many gamblers, he takes a keen interest in the fight. The fight ends in a knockout; but when the defeated boxer is taken to his room, he is dead. The autopsy proves that he had been poisoned. Lorre, entering into the investigation, follows many clues. When he comes near the solution of the crime, his life is threatened. He promises Huber that at the bout between the champion and the winner of the last fight he would, by employing an ingenious method, point out the murderer. His plans work, and the murderer, who had poisoned the other fighter in order to collect bets he had made against him, is discovered; but before the police could arrest him another gambler, who had been tricked into betting. Kills the murderer. Dick Baldwin, the winner of the championship bout, who had been the murdered boxer's opponent, is happy when the case is cleared, for he had been suspected of having committed the murder.

Charles Belden and Jerry Cady wrote the original screen play, using the character originally created by J. P. Marquand; James Tinling directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are Lynn Bari, Douglas Fowley, Jayne Regan, George E. Stone, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Good for adults. Class B.

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If no one pays any attention to my bleat, why should Wilkerson be so excited about what I said? Why the fuss?

Mr. Wilkerson did not understand the meaning of my editorial: I did not say that the producers should not make 35% pictures any longer, but that the present pictures do not deserve such a percentage and must be placed on a lower classification, no matter how expensive they may be, for some of these pictures do not act at the box office even as 30% pictures. When a distributor asks for a picture 35% of the gross receipts, the picture must act like a 35% picture, and not as a 30% or even 25%.

That this paper is right in having taken such a stand may be proved by another article in Wilkerson's paper—the issue of February 25. Under "Tradeviews," Mr. Wilkenson said:

"There has been a mild panic in some quarters around Hollywood due to the cutting down in studio personnel, slowed production, and an actual retarding of contract signing."

Every one of you should be able to form an opinion as to how much demoralization exists among the workers and artists at the studios, particularly among the lower salaried persons, when none of them knows on whom the ax will fall next. And when there is such demoralization, you ought to know what happens to the quality of pictures.

Mr. Wilkerson may come forward with a statement that the laying off has taken place among the low-pay fellows, and that the higher-bracket writers and artists have not been affected. If he should do so, then he will indicate that the years he has spent in Hollywood have not given him a correct idea as to the value of the smaller staff members in the production of pictures. God help the director, or the unit producer, or even the star, if the sound men, the camera crew, or the other helpers should take a dislike to him; they have a way of ganging up on him that nothing that he can do enables him to shoot the picture within the scheduled time, or keep the cost within the budget, or get the best out of his stars and players.

But though a demoralization does exist among the low salaried workers, the writers and the artists, such a demoralization does not exist among the relatives; these continue to receive as much as they received before.

They are trying to lower the cost of production by discharging twenty-five dollar a week stenographers, but leave the \$1,000, the \$1,500, and even the \$2,000 a week salaries of the relatives intact. Can it be done?

### THE MOMAND CONSPIRACY SUIT IN OKLAHOMA

Mr. A. B. Momand, of Shawnee, Oklahoma, has filed two damage suits in the District Court of Oklahoma, asking a total of \$6,636,632.90 from major distributors.

In the first suit, which is for \$1,676,119.96, against 20th Century-Fox, Vitagraph and others, the complaint alleges that:—

"On or about May 1, 1930, the defendant distributors formed a scheme or plan to induce all individual exhibitors to assent to these practices.

"Having presented schedules of 'protection' at the various conferences, the distributor and producer controlled theatres attempted to coerce the independent exhibitor into assenting to them in threats. . . ."

In the second suit, in which Griffith Amusement Company, Consolidated Amusement Co., Consolidated Theatres, Inc., Publix Theatres Corp., Regal Theatres, Inc., are co-defendants, the complaint charges partly:

"In many localities where there were competing independent exhibitors they have charged unreasonably low prices while at the same time admission prices in similar theatres in comparable locations were at much higher rates, and after forcing a competitor out of business they have substantially increased their own prices. They have operated theatres at a loss or at a lower profit than they would otherwise have made and they have renewed expiring leases on unprofitable theatres in order to deprive independent exhibitors of an adequate supply of films. Having ascertained when leases of competing theatres would terminate, they have bid and paid for new leases on said theatres sums far in excess of a reasonable value thereof in order to prevent competing exhibitors from renewing their leases, and thereafter have closed the acquired theatres.

"They have interfered with contracts of leases for sale of motion picture theatre leases and induced the withdrawal of the contracting parties from their agreement in order that they might obtain control of said theatres and as a result have actually obtained control of said theatres.

"In other instances by threats of coercion and intimidation and by threats of relentless competition, fortified by a monopoly of major product, they have compelled independent exhibitors to sell or lease their theatres upon terms prescribed by them.

"They have also picketed competing theatres by causing persons to be stationed at the entrance of said theatre to influence prospective patrons not to attend performances therein, with the result that many of said prospective patrons attended performances at producer-controlled theatres."

If Mr. Momand should ever be able to prove these charges, then the Russia of old would have nothing on the conduct of the defendants in Oklahoma.

Mr. George S. Ryan, of Boston, is attorney for Mr. Momand. Many of you remember, I am sure, the eleven articles Mr. Ryan wrote for this paper in the spring of 1936, under the heading "Anti-Trust Litigation in the Motion Picture Industry." The first article appeared in the April 18 issue, and the last in the June 27 issue. In those articles Mr. Ryan dealt with the different anti-trust cases that had been tried in the United States up to that time; they proved so interesting that many attorneys for exhibitors requested duplicate sets.

Many of those who know Mr. Ryan personally are looking forward with interest to the trial of these cases.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1938

No. 16

## TELL US ANOTHER, MR. SEARS!

According to a news dispatch published in the April 6 issue of weekly *Variety*, Warner Bros. is about ready to announce, like Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Twentieth Century-Fox, the curtailment of the Class "B" feature pictures.

"From out of the front office," says *Variety*, "seeps word that the studio will outdo Metro's bellwether abandonment of B's movement. Understood sales chiefs will impart that information to field crews at impending regionals. Upping of budgets on nearly all features will reportedly cut down season's volume."

If the information *Variety* has printed is true, then the exhibitors would naturally want to know what disposition Warner Bros. will make of Bryan Foy, the producer of the "B" features.

For your information, Bryan Foy makes almost half of the First National-Warner Bros. output; it is said that he is producing three or four pictures at the same time, seated on a wheelable high platform, passing his orders along through a megaphone. In other words, Mr. Foy is turning out his pictures just like the sausage maker turns out his sausages. Here are some facts:

Up to "Beloved Brat," announced for release April 30, First National will have delivered twenty pictures. Of these, ten have been produced by Bryan Foy: "Love Is on the Air," "Over the Goal," "Alcatraz Island," "Adventurous Blonde," "Sh! The Octopus," "The Missing Witness," "She Loved a Fireman," "The Patient in Room 18," "Daredevil Drivers," and "Beloved Brat." Of these, two have been of Good-Fair box-office grade, seven of Fair, and one of Fair-Poor.

Up to "Accidents Will Happen," announced for release April 9, Warner Bros. will have delivered twenty pictures. Of these, nine have been produced by Bryan Foy: "Wine, Women and Horses," "Sergeant Murphy," "The Invisible Menace," "Blondes at Work," "The Kid Comes Back," "Penrod and His Twin Brother," "He Couldn't Say No," "Over the Wall," and "Accidents Will Happen." Of these, two have proved of Good-Fair box-office grade, four of Fair, and three of Fair-Poor.

Combining both programs, we find that forty pictures, or three-fourths of the number promised for delivery, have been produced under the two brands. Of these, nineteen, or 47½%—four of Good-Fair box-office performance, eleven of Fair, and four of Fair-Poor, have been produced by Mr. Foy; and, according to private information from the Coast, Mr. Foy now has in production nine pictures: "Mister Chump," "My Bill," "Crime School," "When You Were Born," "The Singing Cop," "Little Miss Thoroughbred," "Torchy Blane in Panama," "Penrod's Double Trouble,"

and "Mystery House." In other words, if he should produce no more pictures than those he now has under production, he will have produced, out of a total number of sixty promised, (if all should be delivered), twenty-eight. But there can be no doubt that he will produce some more. Thus one man will have produced more pictures than any other producer has ever dreamed of. Can any one doubt that he is putting them out like sausages? Thirty pictures a year mean that he must produce an average of one picture for each nine days, working six full days a week, allowing four weeks a year for vacation. To call such pictures "B" is an indignity upon the second letter of the alphabet; they should be called sausages.

*Variety* says: "Bryan Foy, studio's 'B' production chief, is said to get stiffer priced pictures for his lineup which will remove the stigma of second-class features." HARRISON'S REPORTS is of the opinion that, when a producer has been turning out pictures like sausages for so many years, he finds it difficult, if not impossible, to produce any other grade features, no matter how much more money he is allowed to spend on his pictures. But it doubts the accuracy of the part of *Variety's* information that allows Mr. Foy more money for his pictures, for this reason: For Warner Bros. to allow Mr. Foy to spend more money for his pictures, it will be necessary for its executives to curtail the number of pictures Mr. Foy has been producing.

If they were to reduce the number, then they will have to find three or four other unit producers to make the number of pictures that will be taken away from him, for it is unthinkable that this company will reduce the number of features it has been in the habit of selling each season, by reason of the fact that the Warner Bros. organization is an expensive one and can hardly operate with a smaller number of features. And it is very hard for any company, Warner Bros. included, to find unit producers that can turn out pictures as economically as Bryan Foy; they are not found so easily.—there is a scarcity of them. If they were to get outside producers, who could not turn out pictures so economically, then they will have gained very little, or even nothing, by reducing the number of pictures Mr. Foy has been turning out like sausages year after year.

When the Warner-First National salesmen come around to sell you their "B-less" program, they should be prepared to inform you what proportion of the program will consist of Class A Foy pictures.

Gradwell Sears, sales chief of Warner-First National, had better get up a better story for his salesmen.



**"Island in the Sky" with Gloria Stuart, Michael Whalen and Paul Kelly**  
(20th Century-Fox, April 22; time, 67 min.)

A good murder mystery melodrama; it should hold the attention of the followers of this type of entertainment, for the identity of the murderer is cleverly concealed until almost the end. There is plentiful exciting action, brought about by the heroine's determination to find evidence to clear the young man who had been convicted of the murder, for she believed him innocent, endangering her own life to obtain such evidence. The closing scenes, although slightly far-fetched, are thrilling, holding one in tense suspense. Paul Hurst, as a dumb detective, provokes a few laughs. Gloria Stuart and Michael Whalen make a charming romantic pair, as well as believable detectives:—

On the eve of his marriage to his secretary (Miss Stuart), Whalen, assistant district-attorney, is called in to investigate the murder of an eccentric doctor. All the evidence pointed to the murdered man's son (Robert Kellard). Despite Kellard's protestations of innocence, he is held for the murder, tried and convicted. His sweetheart (June Storey) believes in him; her unhappiness touches Miss Stuart, who informs Whalen that she could not marry him until she had convinced herself that Kellard was actually guilty. Having learned that Paul Kelly, a former racketeer, serving a prison term, was somehow mixed up in the case, she goes to see him. She learns that he, and not the murdered man, was Kellard's father. Kelly had suspicions as to who committed the murder. Miss Stuart helps him escape from prison. On their way back to the city, they pick up two of Kelly's former henchmen. They go to a swanky night club, owned by Leon Ames. There Kelly faces Ames and forces him to confess to the murder, which he had committed to obtain \$200,000 the murdered man had been holding for Kelly. Both Kelly and Ames are killed in the scuffle that follows. Kellard is naturally released. With the case finished, Miss Stuart and Whalen start off on their honeymoon.

Jerry Cady wrote the story, and Francis Hyland and Albert Ray, the screen play; Herbert I. Leeds directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Willard Robertson, and others.

Not suitable for children. Good for adults. Class B.

**"Law of the Underworld" with Chester Morris, Anne Shirley and Walter Abel**  
(RKO, May 6; time, 60 min.)

A fast-moving program gangster melodrama. It is, however, strictly adult fare, for it deals mostly with gangsters' activities, including murders. One twist to the story is somewhat novel: a young couple is shown becoming involved innocently with the gangsters, who force them to do their bidding. One feels deep sympathy for this couple because of their plight. The character portrayed by Chester Morris, a gangster leader, is not a pleasant one; but his gesture in the final scene, whereby he sacrifices himself to save the young couple, wins one's sympathy:—

While walking in the park, Miss Shirley and Richard Bond are held up by two gunmen, who rob them of their savings. They are heartbroken, for they had planned to use it to get married. Bond, having recognized one of the gunmen, who lived in the apartment house where he was employed as an elevator operator, rushes back to the house. He and Miss Shirley force an entrance into the apartment, where the gangsters and their leader (Chester Morris) were meeting, demanding their money. Morris informs them that he could send them to prison for what they were doing, but that he was willing to forget the matter if they would do him a favor. They agree, but are shocked when told they would have to take part in a jewelry store holdup. The holdup is carried out, but a clerk is killed. Morris, in a fight with Ciannelli, an insolent henchman, kills him. Ciannelli's enraged sweetheart (Lee Patrick) betrays Morris, who had always posed as a prosperous business man, and the gang, and is killed for it by one of the gangsters. Miss Shirley and Bond are arrested, and because they refuse to say anything about Morris are held for murder. Morris, unable to see the two youngsters take the blame for him, makes an agreement with the District Attorney (Walter Abel) to sign a confession, provided Miss Shirley and Bond were freed. He signs the confession, knowing it meant the electric chair.

John B. Hymer and Samuel Shipman wrote the story, and Bert Granet and Edmund L. Hartman, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are Paul Guilfoyle, Frank M. Thomas, and others.

Hardly suitable for children. Class B.

**"Arson Gang Busters" with Bob Livingston and Rosalind Keith**

(Republic, March 28; time, 64 min.)

Although based on a routine story, which at times is somewhat far-fetched, this program melodrama offers pretty good entertainment for the neighborhood theatres. It has plentiful action, some exciting fire scenes, and a pleasant romance. And the closing scenes hold one in tense suspense, for there the hero is trapped in a burning building. The devotion of a young boy for the hero awakens considerable human interest:—

While supervising firemen at a burning building, Emory Parnell, Battalion Chief, is killed. Bob Livingston (hero) and his pal (Warren Hymer) adopt Parnell's boy (Jackie Moran). Upon examination of the ruins, Livingston finds evidence to the effect that the fire had been started with chemicals. Livingston obtains a transfer to the arson squad; by persistent investigating he learns the name of the chemist who was used by the gang. But his work is in vain, for Rosalind Keith, a newspaper reporter, finds out the facts and prints them, giving the gang a chance to cover up evidence; they even kill the chemist. Livingston is blamed for what had happened and quits the department. Miss Keith, who had fallen in love with Livingston, is heartbroken when he joins the gang, refusing to listen to her. With his thorough knowledge of chemicals, he proves a valuable asset to them in their business of burning buildings and collecting insurance. But, unknown to them, he was still working for the Department, and was waiting for the opportunity to trap them and to find out who their leader was. He finally is able to do both, but almost loses his life in the attempt. He proves that the leader was none other than Clay Clement, head of an important insurance company. With his work finished and a promotion waiting for him, Livingston marries Miss Keith.

Alex Gottlieb and Norman Burnstine wrote the original screen play, Joe Kane directed it, and Herman Schlom produced it. In the cast are Jack LaRue, Selmer Jackson, Emory Parnell, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Beloved Brat" with Dolores Costello, Bonita Granville and Donald Crisp**

(First National, April 30; time, 62 min.)

Fair program entertainment. It is a drama of misunderstanding between parents and their daughter, presented somewhat in the form of a preachment, and not very cheerful at that. The performances are good; but the theme is unpleasant, for most of it deals with the incorrigibility of Bonita Granville, whose actions put the spectator into a nervous state. Any sympathy that the spectator might have had for her at the beginning, owing to the treatment she received from her mother, is offset by her actions in falsely testifying against the family butler, whom she hated, causing him to be sent to prison. The worst part about it is the fact that she herself had caused the accident. The closing scenes are the most cheerful, for there, under the guidance of Dolores Costello, Miss Granville changes for the better. The romantic interest is merely hinted at:—

Miss Granville, daughter of wealthy Donald Crisp and of Natalie Moorhead, is unhappy because her parents had devoted very little of their time or attention to her. During their absence on a trip, she forms a friendship with a young negro boy. When she invites him to her home for dinner, the butler throws the boy out, thereby enraging Bonita. She tries to get away from the house by starting a fire and escaping through the window. But the butler goes after her and forces her into the car he was driving; she raves at him, grabs hold of the wheel, and swerves the car, crashing into another car and killing the driver. She testifies in court that the butler had been drunk and, because of her testimony, he is sent to prison. Donald Briggs, her father's secretary, whom she adored, becomes suspicious and compels Bonita to tell the truth. The butler is released; but the judge, feeling that Bonita needed some discipline, orders her sent to a private school supervised by Miss Costello. There Bonita changes for the better and is happy. When her parents call to take her home, she refuses to go with them; they leave heartbroken. Because Miss Moorhead becomes ill over worry, Crisp goes to the school to see Bonita; he pleads with her to forgive them and return home. She breaks down and goes with him, looking forward to a new and happy life.

Jean Negulesco wrote the story, and Lawrence Kimble, the screen play; Arthur Lubin directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Lucille Gleason and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Joy of Living" with Irene Dunne and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.**

(RKO, April 15; time, 91 min.)

This comedy, bordering on farce, should go over very well wherever pictures of this type are liked. Irene Dunne, in a serio-comic part, is unusually good. It is because of her and of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.'s acting that the picture is so entertaining, for the story itself is weak—it just serves to tie together a series of situations, some comical and others romantic. There are two extremely comical situations: one, in a beer garden, where Miss Dunne becomes slightly tipsy after drinking beer, and the other, at a roller skating rink where Miss Dunne, still tipsy, enters into a rough skating game and is knocked about. She sings a few songs effectively. The romance is delightful and appealing:

Miss Dunne, a famous Broadway star and radio singer, refuses to believe that her mother (Alice Brady), father (Guy Kibbee), sister (Lucille Ball), and the latter's husband and two children, were taking advantage of her; she felt that they loved her and so she did not mind supporting them in luxury. When she meets Fairbanks, a happy-go-lucky rich man, who lived just for the joy of living, she begins to take an interest in things outside of her work. He takes her out and shows her that one could have fun on two dollars. He urges her to change her manner of living so as to enjoy life. Fearing lest he set off on a cruise, she rushes to him and admits her love for him; they are married, unknown to her family. Fairbanks, expecting her to leave her family and sail with him on his yacht, is enraged when she informs him she could not break her contracts or leave her family stranded. And so they part. But her family, having learned through a newspaper editor of the marriage, and fearing that they would have to go to work, berate her when she arrives home. This so disgusts her that she leaves them, rushing after Fairbanks.

Dorothy and Herbert Fields wrote the story, and Gene Towne, Graham Baker and Allan Scott, the screen play; Tay Garnett directed it, and Felix Young produced it. In the cast are Jean Dixon, Eric Blore, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"There's Always a Woman" with Joan Blondell and Melvyn Douglas**

(Columbia, April 20; time, 80 min.)

A highly entertaining comedy-murder mystery melodrama, with the comedy outstanding. It is somewhat reminiscent of the "Thin Man" series, for here, too, husband and wife both take an interest in the solving of the case, at the same time continuing their personal bickering. There are many comical angles, brought about by the scatter-brained actions of Joan Blondell (the wife). Hearty laughter should be provoked in the situation where Miss Blondell, snooping around the victim's home, sees what she thinks is a wall safe; hoping to get important information, she turns the knob, trying to open it, when suddenly there is a blare of music, for what she thought was a safe was just a radio. Another comical situation is that in which Miss Blondell, who was withholding information from the District Attorney's office, is put under a third-degree examination. In the end she comes out perfectly calm: she had divulged nothing, and her questioners were exhausted. The murder angle is interesting; and since the murderer's identity is not divulged until the end one's attention is held throughout:—

Douglas, who had left the District Attorney's office to go into the private detective business for himself, is disgusted at his failure to make a go of things. Despite the protests of his wife (Miss Blondell), he goes back to the District Attorney's office. But Miss Blondell is not to be daunted—she decides to continue the business herself. She is greatly encouraged when a client (Mary Astor) finally shows up, paying \$300 in advance to shadow Frances Drake, for she felt that Miss Drake was having an affair with her husband (Lester Matthews). Matthews is murdered; Miss Blondell, seeing a chance to get publicity, accuses Miss Drake's fiancé (Robert Paige) of the murder, for she had heard him threaten Matthews. In order to silence her, Paige's attorney engages her to work on the case for them. She comes to the conclusion that Paige was innocent. And so she and Douglas, who had been investigating for the District Attorney's office, have many quarrels, vying with each other to get clues. They both succeed in their work, each one solving the case separately, finally cooperating in capturing the criminal. With their work finished, they become reconciled.

Wilson Collison wrote the story, and Gladys Lehman, the screen play; Alexander Hall directed it, and William Perlberg produced it. In the cast are Jerome Cowan, Thurston Hall, and others.

Not suitable for children. Good for adults. Class B.

**"Port of Missing Girls" with Judith Allen, Harry Carey and Milburn Stone**

(Monogram, March 2; time, 63 min.)

A formula plot, stilted dialogue, and uninspired direction make this program melodrama mild entertainment. The only things in its favor are the performances, particularly by Harry Carey, in the part of a rough sea Captain, and the few interpolated songs. It should fit best in small town theatres, where audiences are not too particular about plot construction or production values. One is in sympathy with the heroine, who innocently becomes involved in a murder; but this is not sufficient to hold one's attention:—

Judith Allen, a night club singer, is forced by Matty Fain, a gangster, to call the proprietor of the club to her dressing room and is then compelled to watch Fain kill him. Fain kidnaps her and then throws her out of the car at the waterfront. Threatened with arrest on one hand and with death on the other if she were to expose the gangsters, she sneaks aboard a tramp steamer, of which Carey was Captain. Disliking women, Carey is at first reluctant to help her; but her honesty wins him over. When they land in Shanghai, he takes her to a cafe, run by an old friend, who promises to take care of her. Carey arranges to carry a cargo of ammunition for a Chinaman, pursuant to government permission. Unknown to Carey, twenty of his passengers and their leader were hijackers. Miss Allen, having learned of the plot from a fellow-entertainer, rushes to the American Consul, who radios Carey in time of his danger. Carey, knowing that Miss Allen had jeopardized her own freedom by going to the American Consul, returns to Shanghai. To every one's joy, Miss Allen receives a cable informing her that Fain had been caught and had confessed. Free once again, she accepts the marriage proposal of Milburn Stone, Carey's radio operator, with whom she had fallen in love.

Karl Brown wrote the original screen play and directed it; Lon Young produced it. In the cast are Betty Compson, Eddie Kane, and others.

The murder makes it somewhat unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Women Are Like That" with Kay Francis and Pat O'Brien**

(First National, April 23; time, 78 min.)

Class audiences may accept this marital drama, but it is doubtful if the masses will find it entertaining. For one thing, it is miscast; although Kay Francis and Pat O'Brien are good individual performers, they do not team up well—at no time does their romance seem believable. For another thing, the characters are weak, particularly the hero, who, for no good reason, goes off on a cruise around the world, leaving his wife (heroine) to fend for herself. This antagonizes the audience, particularly since his reason for doing so seems silly. O'Brien mopes through most of the picture, barely cracking a smile. The story is thin, developing and ending just the way the spectator expects. The wrangling between the partners, as well as the personal quarrels between the hero and the heroine, becomes tiresome:—

On the day she was to marry Ralph Forbes, business partner with her father (Thurston Hall) in the advertising business, Kay Francis elopes with O'Brien, also a member of the firm. During the first year of their marriage they are happy. But things change when Hall runs off to Europe with a young girl, taking with him \$85,000 belonging to the firm. In order to stop the other partners from prosecuting Hall, O'Brien turns over to them his own stock in the company, offering to continue just as an ordinary employee, on condition that nothing would be said to his wife. Things go from bad to worse; without power, O'Brien is unable to cope with the silly demands of Forbes. He works hard to put over an advertising deal with a large firm, but when Forbes refuses to spend the money to put it over properly O'Brien resigns. Miss Francis, desirous of helping her husband, goes to the prospective advertiser, and by her charms gets the account. This so angers O'Brien that he leaves her, going on a cruise around the world. Miss Francis takes his place in the business and is very successful. When O'Brien returns, he joins forces with a competitor and in a short time takes most of the business away from Miss Francis; eventually he buys out her firm. Miss Francis asks O'Brien for a divorce, and he agrees to it. But they realize in time that they still loved each other and are reconciled.

A. H. Z. Carr wrote the story, and Horace Jackson, the screen play; Stanley Logan directed it, and Robert Lord produced it. In the cast are Herbert Rawlinson, Melville Cooper, Gordon Oliver, and others.

Morally suitable for all. Class A.



## FACTS AND FIGURES OF GREAT VALUE TO THE EXHIBITORS

Few exhibitors realize the importance of the unit producer in the scheme of picture making. As a matter of fact, credit has been invariably given to the director as well as to the star for the excellent quality of a picture when the one responsible for it may have been the unit producer. Not that the director does not deserve his share of credit for the fine quality of a picture, but that the unit producer has not been given the credit he really deserves.

Some companies have been employing some unit producers to make a large proportion of the season's output.

In view of the fact that pictures cannot be produced on a pattern with any kind of success, HARRISON'S REPORTS will, beginning next week, start giving the names of the producers of each company and the pictures they produced, during their career as producers, if the facts should be available. With such information on hand, an exhibitor ought to be able to tell at a glance the ability of a company's unit producers, for if a company has a majority or a substantial number of its pictures made by producers who have never produced pictures that performed at the box office better than Fair, it will be useless for it to tell the exhibitor what world-winners its pictures will be next season.

Because of the fact that the selling season is on, every exhibitor ought to read these articles carefully so as to digest this information; it should enable him to talk to the salesmen equipped with facts and figures, greatly at variance with the doctored up facts that may be presented to him by the salesmen.

### CATTARAUGUS THEATRE

Cattaraugus, N. Y.

April 4, 1938.

Mr. P. S. Harrison  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I have read with interest your editorials in reference to the Neely Bill. It really is astonishing that the film companies are as ignorant as they appear to be, as to what is going on in the small towns and villages in these United States. There are about five thousand villages and small towns in the United States with one theatre in them.

The circuits and big city operators are able to protect themselves in the buying of film by the clauses they write into the contracts giving them up to a fifty percent elimination in those towns they control, with but one or two theatres in them. It is from these other individually operated towns and villages that the holler arises for the Neely Bill. Each of these towns has one exhibitor who knows every one for miles around and who is well acquainted with the clergy, the parent teachers association, the mothers clubs and the like.

Maybe the producers don't know it but all these individuals have heard about the Neely Bill from the headquarters and have been urged to write to their representatives in the Senate and House to vote for the bill. In every one of these thousands of villages and towns the exhibitor has been asked "Are you going to have such and such a picture?"

and his answer is "They will not let me have that picture unless I buy 51 others, most of which are either unsuitable for my trade or sure flops at the box-office."

Here is the answer to the producers troubles in reference to the Neely Bill and believe me they will be plagued by Neely Bills and regulation until such time as they grant the owner of the village theatre a selective booking contract. Take it from me the villages have been aroused and all the lobbying of the Hays organization cannot stop a representative from voting as directed by his local constituents; they elected him and can defeat him.

If not this year then the next, but you can rest assured that the film business is going to have a Federal Control Commission and only on account of the one question and answer that I have given you above. With the number of high salaried jobs this commission will have for patronage, the film industry had better look out. They had better change their selling methods to the small town theatre.

Very truly yours,

H. LORENCE.

(Editor's Note: Reprinted by permission.)

## MANY CIVIC, FRATERNAL AND RELIGIOUS BODIES HAVE ENDORSED THE NEELY BILL

Under date of March 18, a letter supporting the Neely Bill, written on the letterhead of Motion Picture Research Council, was sent to every Senator in Washington; it was signed by the heads of each of the following organizations:

American Association of University Women, American Home Economics Association, Association for Childhood Education, Council of Women for Home Missions, Girls' Friendly Society, of the United States, Motion Picture Research Council, National Board of Young Women's Christian Association, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, National Education Association, National Women's Christian Temperance Union, National Women's Trade Union League, and National Grange.

And these are not the only organizations that are supporting the Neely Bill; there are many others. Detroit Council of Catholic Organizations and Legion of Decency, consisting of more than forty Catholic organizations, among which is the local Knights of Columbus, have endorsed it. Mr. Arthur D. Maguire, for a long time president of the organization, and now chairman of the executive committee, has sent me a copy of a letter he has sent to Congressman Sadowski, by which he informs him that the Detroit Council of Catholic organizations is on record in support of the Bill, urging him to support it.

The Neely Bill has, as you see, formidable support. And that is why the producers are making frantic efforts to defeat it. They have brought in, not only the old guns, but also new ones. Among these is Pat Casey, head of Labor Relations of the Hays Association, in Hollywood, a very capable man; he has been very busy enlisting the support of many of his influential friends against the bill. For this reason every one of you must exert his greatest efforts to win additional support for the bill.



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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1938

No. 17

## An Appraisal of the Ability of Unit Producers—No. 1

As announced in last week's issue, beginning with this issue there will appear in these columns a series of articles giving the names of the unit producers employed by each major company and the titles of the pictures these producers have produced this season, and other seasons, if the information should be available.

With the title of each picture there will be given the quality of such picture, taken from the review in HARRISON'S REPORTS, and the box office performance, taken from the periodical check-ups printed in these columns.

The quality will be denoted by the letter "Q," and the box office performance by the letter "B." Thus "Q-F" will denote that the quality was fair, and "B-FP" that the box office performance of that picture was from fair to poor.

The exhibitor must bear in mind that a picture's poor performance at the box office is not always the fault of the unit producer—lack of names, poor title, or many other factors may be the cause, but a picture's poor quality is largely the fault of such producer.

### Columbia

The following unit producers have produced this company's pictures so far this season:

FRANK CAPRA, 1: "Lost Horizon" (Q-E: B-E).  
 Excellent showing.

WALLACE MACDONALD, 7: "Counsel For Crime" (Q-F: B-GP); "Murder in Greenwich Village" (Q-F: B-FP); "All American Sweetheart" (Q-F: B-FP); "The Shadow" (Q-F: B-FP); "Women in Prison" (Q-F: B-F); "Little Miss Roughneck" (Q-F: B-F); "When G-Men Step In" (Q-F: B-Not yet reported).

This producer made the following pictures last season: "Criminals of the Air" (Q-F: B-FP), and "Dangerous Adventure" (Q-F: B-FP).

The quality of all Mr. MacDonald's pictures has been from fair to poor.

HARRY L. DECKER, 2: "The Game That Kills" (Q-F: B-FP); "The Old Wyoming Trail" (a Western: B-FP).

Last season this producer produced the following pictures: "Shakedown" (Q-F: B-FP); "Motor Madness" (Q-F: B-P); "It Can't Last Forever" (Q-FG: B-GF).

Not a good showing.

RALPH COHN, 3: "Paid to Dance" (Q-G: B-FP); "Who Killed Gale Preston" (Q-F: B-Not yet reported); and "Squadron of Honor" (Q-F: B-P).

Last season Mr. Cohn produced the following pictures: "Counterfeit Lady" (Q-F: B-F); "Find the Witness" (Q-F: B-P); "Woman in Distress"

(Q-F: B-FP); "The Parole Racket" (Q-FG: B-FP); "The Frameup" (Q-FG: B-FP); "Speed to Spare" (Q-FP: B-P); "Girls Can Play" (Q-F: B-FP).

Showing, fair.

MYLES CONNOLLY, 2: "Life Begins With Love" (Q-P: B-FP); "It Happened in Hollywood" (Q-FG: B-F).

Last season this producer produced "I Promise to Pay," which turned out good in quality.

Fair showing.

EVERETT RISKIN, 2: "The Awful Truth" (directed by Leo McCarey—Q-E: B-E); and "I'll Take Romance" (Q-P: B-GF).

Last season Mr. Riskin produced the following pictures: "More Than a Secretary" (Q-F: B-G); "When You're in Love" (Q-F: B-GF); and "Let's Get Married" (Q-F: B-F).

This producer's showing is fairly good.

SIDNEY BUCHMAN, 1: "She Married an Artist" (Q-F: B-FG).

Fair showing.

LARRY DARMOUR, 2: "Under Suspicion" (Q-F: B-FP); and "Making the Headlines" (Q-P: B-Not yet reported).

Last season Mr. Darmour produced the following pictures: "North of Nome" (Q-FG: B-FP); "Trouble in Morocco" (Q-P: B-FP); and "Roaring Timber" (Q-P: B-FP).

Poor showing.

NAT PERRIN, 2: "No Time to Marry" (Q-F: B-F); "Start Cheering" (Q-G: B-Not yet reported).

Showing, fairly good.

ROBERT NORTH, 1: "Penitentiary" (Q-FG: B-F).  
 Fairly good showing.

DAVID LOEW, 1: "Wide Open Faces" (Q-F: B-Not yet reported).

Fair showing.

With the exception of Frank Capra, none of these producers has startled anybody.

According to the last check up, printed in the March 5 issue, Columbia has delivered two "A" pictures out of twenty-four, and nineteen of the Fair, Fair-Poor, and Poor grade. And yet the exhibitors have no right to cancel one out of each ten pictures.

The exhibitor organizations should demand of Columbia that it permit the exhibitors to cancel at least ten per cent of the total product.

According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, Colum-  
 (Continued on last page)



**"Flight Into Nowhere" with Jack Holt,  
Dick Purcell and Jacqueline Wells**

(Columbia, April 18; time, 65 min.)

A good program melodrama. The story is pretty interesting, supplying plentiful exciting action for the masses. One is in deep sympathy with Jack Holt, who, in an attempt to locate a lost flyer, risks his own life, going through perilous jungles in his quest. Most of the action is concentrated on the adventures Holt and his men encounter until they finally locate the flyer; and so the romantic interest is kept in the background, even though it is the motivating force in the development of the plot. The character portrayed by Dick Purcell, that of the lost flyer, is an unpleasant one, and so his death at the end does not hurt the spectator's feelings:—

Holt, general manager of a commercial airline, displeased with Purcell, daredevil chief pilot, because of his refusal to take orders, discharges him. But when Miss Wells, niece to the head of the airline, confesses to Holt that she was secretly married to Purcell, he decides to give him another chance, but in an inferior job. Purcell, resenting this, decides to take matters into his own hands; he forces his way into the plane which was to be flown by another flyer on an experimental trip to South America. When they warn him by radio to return home, because he lacked the proper fuel, he refuses to believe them; he continues on and eventually crashes in an unexplored valley. Holt, for the sake of his company's reputation and because of his sympathy for Miss Wells, starts out on a search for Purcell. He has to make the greater part of the trip by foot through jungles, amidst antagonistic tribes. After much hardship he finally finds Purcell, but is disgusted at what had happened to him. Purcell had married the chief's daughter, and thought nothing of leaving her to return to civilization. As much as Holt hates him, he decides to take him back; but one of the tribesmen, who loved the native girl, kills Purcell just as he was setting out on the trip. Holt returns and comforts Miss Wells with stories about her husband's heroism, making her believe he had died a hero.

William Bloom and Clarence J. Schneider wrote the story, and Jefferson Parker and Gordon Rigby, the screen play; Lewis D. Collins directed it, and Larry Darmour produced it. In the cast are James Burke, Howard Hickman, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"A Trip to Paris" with Jed Prouty,  
Spring Byington and Harold Huber**

(20th Century-Fox; May 6; time, 63 min.)

The Jones Family again provide an hour's entertainment that is bound to delight their followers. Not only is it up to the standard set for this series, but it surpasses the others in production values. For the first thirty minutes, there is so much comedy that one is kept laughing almost continuously. Most of the laughter is provoked by the manner in which the father (Jed Prouty) is talked into taking his family to Paris. Upon receiving a check for \$5,000 for the sale of some stock, Prouty had remarked to his banker that he might take his family to Paris Falls, New York, for a vacation. The banker's secretary, however, hearing the word Paris, immediately starts telephoning neighbors to tell them that Prouty was taking his family to Paris, France. By the time Prouty arrives home, the news had reached his family, and so they greet him with shouts of joy; upon the advice of his mother, he decides not to disappoint them. There is a particular heart-warming quality about this picture, making one rejoice with the family in their good fortune. As a matter of fact, one is by this time so well acquainted with them and their habits, that one feels as if they were old friends. Harold Huber, as the bohemian Parisian cousin, who sets out to entertain the family, at the same time enriching himself, is a welcome addition, provoking laughter by his excitability. There is some excitement in the closing scenes, when the older son innocently becomes involved with a spy ring. But everything is adjusted. Prouty, just before returning to America, plays a trick on Huber by inducing him to spend in one lavish party the money he had made on them.

Robert Ellis and Helen Logan wrote the original screen play, Mal St. Clair directed it, and Max Golden produced it. In the cast are Shirley Deane, Ken Howell, George Ernest, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel"  
with Barry Barnes and Sophie Stewart**

(London Film-United Artists, Apr. 29; time, 80 min.)

In 1935, United Artists released "The Scarlet Pimpernel," with Leslie Howard and Merle Oberon in the leading parts; it was excellent entertainment. This version, which is a sequel to the first, but with different, and, as far as Americans are concerned, unknown players, is not up to the entertainment level of the previous picture. It can stand comparison so far as production values are concerned, but falls short in the development of plot. For one thing, those who saw the other picture may be slightly bored, for the story is developed along similar lines—it is made up mostly of the daring exploits on the part of the hero and his small band of aristocrats in fighting against the French government headed by the murderous Robespierre; although these provide several exciting moments there are dull lapses, during which the action drags. For another, although the part of "The Scarlet Pimpernel" is played well by Barry Barnes, it does not come up to Leslie Howard's performance:—

Robespierre, annoyed because many aristocratic prisoners had been rescued from the guillotine by the fearless Sir Percy Blakeney (Barry Barnes), known through the land as "The Scarlet Pimpernel," and his band of aristocrats, informs Citizen Chauvelin (Francis Lister), Minister of Police, that unless he captured Sir Blakeney, he would pay with his own life. By making veiled threats against Jean Tallien (James Mason), a Revolutionary leader, Chauvelin enlists the aid of Theresia Cabarrus (Margaretta Scott), Tallien's sweetheart, to help him trap Sir Blakeney. She goes to Sir Blakeney's home in England, where he was living with his wife Marguerite (Sophie Stewart), and pleads with him to help her save Tallien's life. Since he had promised his wife, who was about to become a mother, that he would not again risk his life, he refuses to help her; furthermore, he mistrusted her. But she sets her trap by kidnapping Marguerite, thereby forcing Sir Blakeney and his men to follow her to France. Marguerite is rescued but recaptured; she is tried and sentenced to the guillotine. Sir Blakeney induces Tallien, who really hated Robespierre, to rebel at the Convention; his plan works, for Tallien so arouses the crowd that they arrest Robespierre, and release all prisoners. Sir Blakeney and his wife are reunited. They rescue Chauvelin from the mob and take him to England with them.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Baroness Orczy; Lajos Biro, Arthur Wimperis, and Adrian Brunel wrote the screen play, Hans Schwartz directed it, and Alexander Korda produced it with Arnold Pressburger, as assistant producer. In the cast are Anthony Bushell, Patrick Barr, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Lone Wolf in Paris"  
with Francis Lederer and Frances Drake**

(Columbia, March 24; time, 67 min.)

Despite a lavish production, this melodrama, centering around a fictitious kingdom, is just fair program entertainment. It is not the typical crook story that the title would imply, for this time the Lone Wolf (played by Francis Lederer) practices his old profession of jewel stealing only to help out the Queen and the Princess of the fictitious kingdom, who were threatened by conspirators. Most of the action revolves around the attempts of Lederer to outwit the plotters, who, during most of the picture, have the upper hand. The romance, which is just hinted at, does not materialize:—

Lederer, reformed jewel thief, while on a visit to Paris, meets Frances Drake, under peculiar circumstances; he found her hiding in his room in order to avoid being detected by a group of sinister looking persons. Lederer at first thinks that she was a crook, but later learns that she was a Princess, and that the sinister looking persons were conspirators, who were plotting to overthrow the government, and seize the throne for themselves. They had stolen the crown jewels, in an effort to blackmail the Queen into abdicating. But Lederer foils their plans. After a hectic chase he steals the jewels and returns them to the Queen, thereby upsetting their plot; the conspirators are arrested. Lederer regretfully leaves the Princess to return to Paris.

Louis Joseph Vance wrote the story, and Arthur T. Horman, the screen play; Albert S. Rogell directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Olaf Hyton, Walter Kingsford, Leona Maricle, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Battle of Broadway" with Victor McLaglen, Brian Donlevy and Louise Hovick**

(20th Century-Fox, Apr. 22; time, 85½ min.)

A rowdy comedy, with plentiful laughs; it should go over well with the masses. The picture is slightly reminiscent of the old Flagg-Quirt comedies, in which McLaglen formerly appeared, for here, too, there is constant rivalry between two friends (McLaglen and Donlevy) in the matter of fighting and flirting. It is a little rough and suggestive at times; but this does not make it too objectionable, since everything is treated from a comedy angle. Louise Hovick, the reason for most of the quarrels, manages her part well, provoking laughs by the way in which she plays up to both men. The musical interpolations add to the entertainment values. Most of the excitement is concentrated in the closing scenes, which are riotously comical:—

McLaglen and Donlevy, steel workers in the plant owned by Raymond Walburn, a former war buddy, prepare to go to New York for the American Legion Convention. Having heard that his young son (Robert Kellard) had fallen in love with a chorus girl, Walburn urges McLaglen and Donlevy to do all in their power to put an end to the affair; he tells them that they could have unlimited funds for expenses. Kellard calls to see them when they arrive in New York, and realizes that they intended to break up his romance; he decides to put them on the wrong track. He enlists the aid of Miss Hovick, night-club entertainer, in pretending that she was the girl he loved, when in reality he loved Lynn Bari. The two fighting pals, believing it their duty to win Miss Hovick away from Kellard, both shower attention and gifts on her, sending the bills to Walburn. When Walburn receives the bills, amounting to thousands of dollars, he decides to go to New York himself, and confront Miss Hovick. No sooner does he meet her than he falls in love with her, and, to the consternation of his son and two employees, announces his engagement to her. Believing that she was a golddigger, they abduct Walburn and place him in a sanitarium. But Walburn manages to get a call through to Miss Hovick, who had really fallen in love with him; she rushes to him. McLaglen and Donlevy, sorry for what they had done, decide to fix matters up; but when they arrive at the sanitarium, they meet antagonistic guards and enter into a fierce fight. While they are fighting, Miss Hovick and Walburn are married by one of the patients, a Judge.

Norman Houston wrote the story, and Lou Breslow and John Patrick, the screen play; George Marshall directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Jane Darwell, Sammy Cohen, and others.

It might be a little rough for children; otherwise suitable. Class A.

**"Invisible Enemy" with Alan Marshal, Tala Birell and Mady Correll**

(Republic, April 4; time, 65 min.)

This espionage comedy-melodrama is suitable mostly as a second feature in neighborhood theatres. It is doubtful if any one will take the supposed melodramatic part of the picture seriously, for the story is far-fetched. Where audiences are, however, not too particular, it may go over for there is plentiful action, regardless of how ridiculous it may be. The assembled players and their performances are far superior to the material given them. A romance is just hinted at:—

Alan Marshal, former British Intelligence Officer, is engaged by a powerful oil corporation to prevent C. Henry Gordon, an unscrupulous international financier, from selling certain oil fields to a foreign country that needed them for war purposes. The idea was for Marshal to renew friendship with Gordon's wife (Tala Birell), his former sweetheart, and through her find out the secret meeting place of the plotters. Gordon finds out about Marshal and his plans, and therefore has a double reason for wanting to kill him—jealousy over his wife, and a desire to carry through his plans. Marshal manages to escape from the traps set for him by Gordon, and accidentally finds out where the meeting place was to be. He calls newspaper reporters and photographers to the spot and breaks up the meeting, photographing all the men involved in the plot. Gordon kills himself by means of a device he had meant to use on Marshal. Miss Birell is surprised when she learns that Marshal did not love her, but instead was in love with Mady Correll, who had always loved him.

Albert J. Cohen and Robert T. Shannon wrote the story, and Albert J. Cohen, Alex Gottlieb, and Norman Burnstine, the screen play; John H. Auer directed and produced it. In the cast are Herbert Mundin, Gerald Oliver Smith, Ivan Simpson, and others.

Suitability, Class B.

**"Rawhide" with Smith Ballew, Lou Gehrig and Evalyn Knapp**

(20th Century-Fox; Apr. 8; time, 58 min.)

Good, as westerns go. And there is no doubt that, with the added attraction of Lou Gehrig's name, it will do better than average business. But it will disappoint his fans, both young and old, for he is not given a chance to show his ability as a baseball player—that is, there is not one scene of a baseball game in which he participates. Instead, the story follows the routine western plot, with the action centering around Gehrig's fight against a racketeering cattle association. Considering the fact that youngsters all over the country will want to see their baseball hero, it is a pity that a more wholesome story was not used for his picture debut, nor baseball scenes. Gehrig has a pleasant, easy-going manner, making one forget his shortcomings as an actor. The musical interpolations are pleasant:—

Gehrig, a big-time baseball player, decides to give up baseball and settle down on the cattle ranch his sister (Evalyn Knapp) had bought. Looking forward to peace and quiet, he is annoyed to find upon his arrival that the ranchers were in the clutches of an organized gang of thugs headed by Arthur Loft. The ranchers were forced to join the gang's protective association, pay tribute to it, and further, were compelled to buy all their supplies from the gang. Gehrig, backed up by his sister and a young lawyer (Smith Ballew), decides to fight the gangsters. When he brings in fodder from another town, the gangsters burn it; but he tricks them into giving him other fodder without paying for it. In the end, they cut off the water supply from his ranch. In a terrific fight between the organized ranchers, led by Ballew and Gehrig, and the gangsters, the ranchers come out victorious. Ballew is made head of the new organization. Gehrig decides to give up ranch life to go back to baseball. He is happy that his sister and Ballew had fallen in love with each other.

Dan Jarrett wrote the story, and he and Jack Natteford, the screen play; Ray Taylor directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. In the cast are Carl Stockdale, Si Jenks, Cy Kendall, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Reckless Living" with Robert Wilcox and Nan Grey**

(Universal, April 1; time, 67½ min.)

A pleasant program comedy-romance, centering around horse racing. Although the action is not particularly exciting, it manages to hold one's attention fairly well throughout. Some of the laughs are provoked by Jimmy Savo, a racetrack tout, who tries to sell racing information to innocent looking spectators at the track. Amusing, too, are the means employed by the hero and his pals to raise enough money with which to place bets. There is deep human appeal in the closing scenes because of the humaneness displayed by the hero:—

Robert Wilcox, a racetrack follower, looks forward to the day when he could win enough money to go back to his home town and settle down. He and a few friends live at a boarding house run by May Boley; they are all broke. Wilcox is annoyed when Nan Grey, a night club singer, who, too, followed the races around the country, sees a great deal of William Lundigan, wealthy owner of a string of horses, for he himself was in love with her. Luck finally changes for Wilcox; he wins a fairly large sum of money, and decides to go back home. On the last day of the races, he takes to the track Harry Davenport, half-blind newspaper seller, and there learns that Davenport had wagered his all on a certain race. Knowing that he was planning to use the winnings to obtain a place in an old man's home, Wilcox decides not to tell him that the horse had not won. Instead, he tells him that it had won and gives him his own savings, pretending they were the winnings. Miss Grey, impressed with this act, promises to marry Wilcox; she is happy to know that he had taken a job as trainer for a well-known stable.

Gerald Beaumont wrote the story, and Charles Grayson, the screen play; Frank McDonald directed it. In the cast are Frank Jenks, Charles Judels, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



bia has taken over another studio with a view to increasing its facilities for making a larger number of "B" pictures. What Columbia needs to do is to increase its facilities for making, not more "B" pictures, but more "A" pictures. Almost its entire program consists of "B" pictures; why should it want to increase the number?

### THE NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW HAS SPOKEN!

The executive Committee of the National Board of Review has come out against the Neely Bill; it has issued a statement attacking it, recommending that the solutions of the industry problems be confined within the industry itself.

Your Senator or your Congressman may not know that the National Board of Review is sustained by producer money; it charges \$6 per reel for the work of reviewing pictures, whether they are features or shorts. If he does not know that such is the case, you should inform him of it at once, so that he may not remain under the impression that the National Board of Review is an independent body, doing its work gratis, for the good of the people of the United States.

If the money for its sustenance were derived from public contributions, there would be no complaint against its executives for either attacking or defending the Neely Bill, for it would be merely a case of personal conviction; but when such money comes from the producers, the recipients of it should keep in their shell and not take a part in such controversial subjects, unless they first make clear to the public their partisanship, which must result from their producer-controlled purse strings.

### A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Mr. Jack Sichelman, Assistant to Mr. John Clark, general manager of 20th Century-Fox, has put out a little pamphlet, the purpose of which is to enlist the interest of the projectionists for the better care of the film while in their possession.

The booklet is written intelligently, in that Mr. Sichelman seeks to accomplish his object, not by preachment, but by a sympathetic understanding.

I understand that a copy or two has been mailed to every theatre in the United States and Canada. If you have failed to receive a copy you should write for one, either to the Twentieth Century-Fox exchange that serves you, or to Mr. Sichelman directly, at 20th Century-Fox, 444 West 56th St., New York. Your operator should receive a copy.

### BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU PAY FOR THE COMING SEASON'S PICTURES

From Pittsburgh comes the admonition to the exhibitors not to buy pictures until they hear or read what is to be said at the Allied convention, which will be held in that city, on May 17, 18 and 19; it has been sent out by Messrs. M. A. Rosenberg, chairman, and Fred J. Herrington, secretary, of the convention.

From Hollywood comes news that demoralization exists at the studios: *The Hollywood Reporter*, commenting on this fact in the April 9 issue, says:

"As we said here before, pictures must be made, releases must be met—so there will be production, plenty of it; as much as in other years. But the rising cost in making pictures, a cost that has almost blown the lid off all the studios, is now being met with something resembling reasonable retrench-

ment. This may result in a riot of bad judgment a little later, particularly if grosses continue their dive, but at present the retrenchments ARE reasonable. But even that resembles a panic to many creators who have been used to boom time salaries and boom time employment. The boom is over, tough times are here, accordingly studio moves must be considered on that basis."

"Yes, and so should film prices. The exhibitors must realize that they cannot pay boom-time prices when the "boom" is over.

The demoralization that exists at the studios is already telling on entertainment quality and box office power. For this reason you will do well to heed the admonition of the Convention Committee about delaying the purchase of your 1938-39 season's pictures until you get a chance to hear what will be said at the Allied Convention in Pittsburgh, which you should by all means attend.

### "A STEP TO THE RIGHT" IS RIGHT!

Under the title quoted at the heading of this editorial, the April 7 issue of *Daily Variety*, which is published in Hollywood, said:

"Grad Sears, Warner's sales chieftain, comes forth with a statement that 'Robinhood' will not be sold to exhibitors who want to make sure of trade by playing it on giveaway or premium nights.

"Mr. Sears is right. Other company sales heads also would be right, if they took that attitude on the merchandising of their product.

"Distributors and producers cry that they cannot get sufficient rentals for big pictures. That's no one else's fault but their own. They are entitled to rentals commensurate with the drawing power of their respective pictures.

"When they cause exhibitors to resort to giveaway and premium nights to get business into theatres they cannot expect to get returns that they would were the exhibitor to operate his business on a straight picture merchandising basis. . . ."

HARRISON'S REPORTS should like to ask Mr. Sears which of the 19 Foy "B" pictures, the names of which were given in these columns last week, could bring in business without the aid of premium offerings.

### DOUBLE FEATURE DOCTORS

The double feature question seems to have aroused the interest also of newspaper people, if one is to judge by the polls they conduct now and then among the picture going public so as to ascertain their wishes.

Invariably, the polls indicate that the majority are opposed to double features. And yet in most theatres in the New England territory a single feature does not draw, even if the one feature happened to be a roadshow picture.

What's the answer?

There are many doctors for the double feature ill, but the real doctor is only one—the exhibitor. It is he, after all, who determines whether two features on the same bill are or are not profitable for him. So it is a waste of time to keep on telling him how bad it is for him to show two features on the same bill, for if it were so he would have discovered it long ago, and would have abandoned it. As long as he continues making a profit all the ink that may be spilled in the printing of gratuitous advice will be spilled in vain.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 1938

No. 18

### An Appraisal of the Ability of Unit Producers—No. 2

BERNARD H. HYMAN, 1: "Conquest" (Q-VG::B-G).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Saratoga" (Q-F::B-E-VG).

Very good showing.

WILLIAM ANTHONY MCGUIRE, 2: "Rosalie" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Girl of the Golden West" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported.)

Very good showing.

LOUIS D. LIGHTON, 2: "Man Proof" (Q-FG::B-GF); "Test Pilot" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported.)

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Captains Courageous" (Q-E::B-E).

A very good showing.

JAMES K. MCGUINNESS, 1: "Madame X" (Q-G::B-VG-G).

Very good showing.

MICHAEL BALCON, 1: "A Yank at Oxford" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported.)

Very good showing.

MILTON H. BREN, 1: "Merrily We Live" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported.)

Very good showing.

NORMAN KRASNA, 2: "Big City" (Q-VG::B-G); "The First Hundred Years" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported.)

This producer has made a good showing.

JOSEPH L. MANKIEWICZ, 3: "The Bride Wore Red" (Q-G::B-G); "Double Wedding" (Q-FG::B-VG-G); "Mannequin" (Q-G::B-VG-G).

Good showing.

HARRY RAFF, 4: "Live, Love and Learn" (Q-G::B-GF); "Thoroughbreds Don't Cry" (Q-FG::B-G); "Bad Man of Brimstone" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Everybody Sing" (Q-G::B-GF).

Good showing.

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Mad Holiday" (Q-F::B-F); "Espionage" (Q-F::B-FP); "Good Old Soak" (Q-F::B-GF); "They Gave Him a Gun" (Q-F::B-GF). (Fairly good showing.)

SAM ZIMBALIST, 2: "Navy Blue and Gold" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "Paradise for Three" (Q-G::B-GF).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Tarzan Escapes" (Q-FG::B-GF); "Married Before Breakfast" (Q-G::B-GF); "London by Night" (Q-F::B-F).

A good showing.

FREDERICK STEPHANI, 2: "Beg, Borrow or Steal" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Love Is a Headache" (Q-F::B-GF).

Fairly good showing.

JOHN W. CONSIDINE, JR., 2: "Of Human Hearts" (Q-VG::B-G); "Arsene Lupin Returns" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported.)

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Personal Property" (Q-F::B-G), and "Emperor's Candlesticks" (Q-G::B-VG-G).

Good showing.

MICHAEL FESSIER, 1: "The Women Men Marry" (Q-F::B-F).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Women Are Trouble" (Q-F::B-F), and "Song of the City" (Q-F::B-P).

Not very good showing.

As said before, the unit producer is the most important factor in picture production, even more important than the director himself, for the reason that it is he who determines the twist the story shall take and the characterizations that shall be made. The director is unquestionably important, but he has to take his cue from the producer, except, of course, in the case of big directors, who are in a position to overrule the producer, frequently to their sorrow.

This check up shows with great accuracy the capability of a producer. If he is a top-notch man, it is shown in it; his ability to make good pictures cannot be attributed to luck, for luck cannot follow him on all occasions. He may have bad luck now and then and make a bad picture, but when seven or eight out of each ten are good pictures, then his ability cannot be questioned. On the other hand, if a producer makes only two good pictures out of ten, then he, in the opinion of this paper, lacks the ability of making good pictures, and that his occasional good picture is merely a matter of blind luck.

"Q" indicates the picture's quality, and "B," its box-office performance.

#### First National and Warner Bros.

ROBERT LORD, 3: "That Certain Woman" (Q-VG::B-G); "Tovarich" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "Women Are Like That" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

This producer has made a very good showing.

SAM BISCHOFF, 5: "Back in Circulation" (Q-FG::B-GF); "Hollywood Hotel" (Q-G::B-G); "Gold Is Where You Find It" (Q-VG::B-EG); "Swing Your Lady" (Q-F::B-GF); "A Slight Case of Murder" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported).

This producer has made a very good showing.

HENRY BLANKE, 1: "Jezebel" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported—from oral information, FP).

Very good showing, as far as quality is concerned.

MERVYN LE ROY, 3: "They Won't Forget" (Q-VG::B-G); "The Great Garrick" (Q-FG::B-GP); "Fools for Scandal" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

Showing, good. But Mr. LeRoy is no longer producing for Warner Bros.

HARRY JOE BROWN, 3: "The Perfect Specimen" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "It's Love I'm After" (Q-VG::B-GF); "First Lady" (Q-FG::B-GF).

Good showing.

LOU EDELMAN, 3: "Submarine D-1" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Varsity Show" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Love, Honor and Behave" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

Good showing.

FRANK MANDEL, 1: "Expensive Husbands" (Q-P::B-FP).

Poor showing.

BRYAN FOY, 19: This producer's pictures were reported in the April 16 issue.

The Westerns are not reported.

Notice that Bryan Foy alone has so far produced as many pictures as the seven other unit producers combined—nineteen.

#### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

HUNT STROMBERG, 1: "Firefly" (Q-G::B-VG-G).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "The Great Ziegfeld" (Q-VG::B-VG); "After the Thin Man" (Q-VG::B-E); "Maytime" (Q-VG::B-E); "Night Must Fall" (Q-G::B-GP).

Excellent showing.



**"Go Chase Yourself" with Joe Penner and Lucille Ball**

(RKO, April 22; time, 70 min.)

Pretty good entertainment, despite a nonsensical story. It is the best Joe Penner comedy to date; and those who enjoy this comedian's antics will get their money's worth, for he appears throughout. He is given good support, too, and is not alone in provoking laughs; Fritz Feld, as an impoverished nobleman, helps considerably. The action is fast and the situations are, for the most part, comical. One is held in fair suspense, owing to Penner's predicament in becoming innocently connected with a gang of crooks. The closing scenes, where a trailer, occupied by Penner and others, becomes loosened from the automobile to which it had been attached, are exciting:—

Penner, a meek bank teller, is overjoyed at winning a trailer; but his wife (Lucille Ball), does not share his joy and orders him to sleep in it. Three crooks (Richard Lane, Tom Kennedy, and Bradley Page), after robbing Penner's bank of \$50,000, notice the trailer; they attach it to their car and drive off with it so as to avoid police detection. When Penner awakens in the morning, he is startled to find the men in his trailer; after listening to a radio announcement he realizes that they were the crooks, but he is compelled to stick with them because he, too, was named as one of the crooks. On the road they meet June Travis, an heiress, who was running away from a distasteful marriage with a fake nobleman (Feld). Page decides to kidnap Miss Travis and hold her for ransom. By appealing to Penner's chivalry, he convinces him that he should rescue Miss Travis from her hateful marriage. It is not until Miss Travis joins them, that Penner realizes he had been double-crossed. To add to his troubles, the crooks force him to write the ransom note to her father, and to send it back with her bag. Penner, by mistake, sends the bag containing the \$50,000. After many hectic experiences, the police, Miss Travis' family, and Penner's wife catch up with them. The crooks are arrested, and Penner's position is explained. He is restored both to his position and to his wife's affections.

Walter O'Keefe wrote the story, and Paul Yawitz and Bert Granet, the screen play; Edward F. Cline directed it, and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are Granville Bates, George Irving, Arthur Stone, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Nurse from Brooklyn" with Sally Eilers and Paul Kelly**

(Universal, April 15; time, 66 min.)

A fairly good program melodrama; it holds one in suspense throughout, because of the constant danger to the hero. In spite of the fact that the story is not novel, it is consistently entertaining owing to good direction and acting. The heroine's determination and efforts to avenge her brother's death are not edifying; yet one sympathizes with her, particularly in the closing scenes, when she repents and tries to save the hero. The pleasant romance is developed with a light touch:

Sally Eilers, a nurse at a hospital, is overjoyed when her brother (Maurice Murphy) is released from prison. Unknown to her, he had been led into crime by Larry Blake, whom she considered a dear friend. Blake, on a pretext of taking Murphy to his sister's apartment, takes him on a robbery job in a stolen car; Murphy refuses to aid him, having determined to go straight. Paul Kelly, a policeman, who had followed them, is spotted by Blake, who shoots at him. Blake then shoots Murphy, in order to stop him from talking. They are both taken to Miss Eiler's hospital. Kelly is just wounded, but Murphy dies. Miss Eilers, believing Blake's story that Kelly had cold-bloodedly killed her brother, promises to help Blake get Kelly. But she falls in love with Kelly, and, in the end, cannot go through with the plans. In a gun battle, Kelly finally kills Blake. It is then that Miss Eilers learns the truth about the killing of her brother. She is grateful that Kelly had not been hurt.

Steve Fisher wrote the story, and Roy Chanslor, the screen play; S. Sylvan Simon directed it, and Edmund Grainger produced it. In the cast are Morgan Conway, David Oliver, Lucile Gleason, and others.

Because of the shooting it is unsuitable for children.

Class B.

**"The Lady in the Morgue" with Preston Foster, Patricia Ellis and Frank Jenks**

(Universal, April 22; time, 69 min.)

Murder mystery fans should enjoy this because of the mystifying plot and the fact that the murderer's identity is not easily detected. The story is kept moving at a fast pace; and although three murders are committed, it is not too gruesome, for there is plentiful comedy. Preston Foster makes a believable detective, acting the part with assurance; the manner in which he goes about solving the case is not too far-fetched. The romantic angle is minimized:—

Foster, a private detective, is sent to the morgue to identify the body of a young woman found hanging in the bathroom of a midtown hotel; his job was to find out whether she was the young society girl who had disappeared from home, a fact that had not been publicized by her family. While he is at the morgue, another murder occurs; some one takes the body of the young girl, killing the morgue keeper in doing so. Matters become complicated for Foster, since the police believed that he had a hand in the case. And he is in a dangerous position, too, for two gangsters (James Robbins and Joseph Downing), believing that the victim had been some one they knew, each warns Foster that, unless he found out where the body had been taken, they would kill him. Foster solves the case by proving that the young society girl (Patricia Ellis) was alive, that the victim had been the wife of a musician with whom Miss Ellis was in love, and that the musician had killed her so as to be able to marry the wealthy Miss Ellis. The other murders had been committed by Miss Ellis' brother, in order to prevent the truth from coming out, which would involve his family in a scandal.

Jonathan Latimer wrote the story, and Eric Taylor and Robertson White, the screen play; Otis Garrett directed it, and Irving Starr produced it. In the cast are Tom Jackson, Morgan Wallace, Al Hill and others.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Test Pilot" with Clark Gable, Myrna Loy and Spencer Tracy**

(MGM, April 22; time, 120 min.)

Excellent entertainment and, because of the popularity of the three stars, a powerful box-office attraction. But MGM has not depended on the stars alone to put the picture over; it has given them a story with thrills, romance, comedy, and deep human appeal. Other air pictures have been made; but for sheer thrills, this one leads them all because of the realistic way it has been done. For instance, the situation showing Clark Gable, racing in a burning plane, leaves one limp; and the big scene, in which Gable and Tracy test an army bomber, going to a height of 30,000 feet, grips one, for one has a feeling of impending tragedy. The picture has also great emotional appeal, because of the suffering of Myrna Loy due to the perilous work of Gable, her husband. One sympathizes so deeply with her, that each time Gable goes into the air, one goes through all the emotions she goes through. But the most appealing part is the inspiring friendship between Gable, Tracy, and Miss Loy. Tracy, intensely devoted to Gable, suffers with Miss Loy, not only because of his feelings for Gable, but also because he alone understood what she was going through; at the same time he realizes that Gable, who occasionally would go off on a drunken spree, had to do that to keep up his nerve. Both he and Miss Loy, knowing Gable's great love for flying, feel that the end must be tragic. But it is Tracy who dies, following a plane crash in which he was acting as mechanic for Gable, during the test of a new army bomber. His death saddens the spectator considerably, for he is an admirable character. Gable's and Miss Loy's grief at their loss touches one deeply. But in a way Tracy's death brings about the means for the couple's happiness, because it makes Gable think; he decides to take the advice of his employer (Lionel Barrymore) to do ground work. This brings joy to Miss Loy.

Frank Wead wrote the story, and Vincent Lawrence and Waldemar Young, the screen play; Victor Fleming directed it, and Louis D. Lighton produced it. In the cast are Samuel S. Hinds, Marjorie Main, Gloria Holden and others.

Suitable for all. Class A.



**"Rascals" with Jane Withers, Rochelle Hudson and Robert Wilcox**

(20th Century-Fox, May 20; time, 77 min.)

Fair entertainment, suitable mostly for the Jane Withers fans. As usual, Jane comes through with an excellent performance, singing and dancing in a competent manner; she is given good support by Borrah Minevitch and his gang of harmonica players, who supply not only the music but comedy as well, and who appear throughout with her. But the story is infantile, lacking novelty and fast action. As a matter of fact, the musical interpolations save it from mediocrity. The closing scenes are fairly exciting and amusing:

Robert Wilcox, who had taken refuge with a gypsy band after a disappointing love affair, and Jane, a gypsy, are pals. Rochelle Hudson wanders into the camp; she looked as if she had been in an accident, but since she was suffering from amnesia she could remember nothing. Jane cares for her and makes her a member of their band. Wilcox, hating all women, is at first resentful of Miss Hudson's intrusion; but he soon falls in love with her and is happy when she admits that she loved him. Upon advice of a doctor, Wilcox decides that Miss Hudson must have a head operation to restore her memory. The gang gets the money together by giving performances in the open and in night clubs. After the operation Miss Hudson's memory is restored; but this time she cannot remember anything about the gypsies and goes back to her own wealthy home, from which she had run away because she did not want to marry the man her mother had chosen for her. Jane, with the help of Minevitch and his gang, stops the wedding, presenting Wilcox as the man Miss Hudson should marry. Suddenly Miss Hudson remembers everything, and there is a joyful celebration as she prepares to marry Wilcox instead of her former suitor.

Robert Ellis and Helen Logan wrote the screen play, H. Bruce Humberstone directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are Steffi Duna, Katharine Alexander, Chester Clute, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Torchy Blane in Panama" with Lola Lane and Paul Kelly**

(First National, May 7; time, 59 min.)

Just a fair bank robbery melodrama, with a murder for good measure. It is the kind that glorifies a woman newspaper reporter, at the expense of a man-reporter and of a prominent detective. It is of about the same quality as that of the other pictures of this series, only with different leads. The spectator is held in fairly tense suspense. But just why Warner Bros., like the other producing companies, insists upon presenting the detective's assistant as a stupid person is a mystery; no doubt it is the Hollywood conception of comedy:—

A bank robbery with murder is committed by Stanley Crafton (Anthony Averill). Torchy Blane (Lola Lane), newspaper reporter, who had rushed to the scene of the holdup, finds a pin belonging to a dead member of the Loyal Leopards, a fraternal organization headed for its convention in San Francisco. She attempts to tell of her discovery to Detective Lt. Steve McBride (Paul Kelly), to whom she was engaged, but Steve, believing that a woman's place should be in the home, refuses to listen to her. Consequently she writes a headline story of her suspicions. Later Torchy expresses to Steve her belief that the person who had committed the crime was not a member of the Loyal Leopards, but that he no doubt was following the members on the boat, going to San Francisco through Panama as the only way for the murderer to get rid of his loot. Although he "poo-hoos" the idea, he decides to follow the clue, but secretly. When Torchy hears that Steve, accompanied by a rival paper's reporter, had taken the boat, she hires a plane to overtake it. She then makes a parachute jump and is picked up by the boat's crew. On the boat she becomes acquainted with Crafton, and becomes suspicious of him. Soon her suspicions are confirmed. She follows Crafton ashore at Colon, to his hiding place. Crafton discovers her and makes her a prisoner. But Steve, who had learned of her step by a note she had left in his stateroom, succeeds in rescuing her, and in arresting the criminal.

The plot has been taken from a story by Anthony Colde-way. George Bricker wrote the screen play, and William Clemens directed it; Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Tom Kennedy, Betty Compson, Joe Cunningham, and others.

Being a crook picture it is hardly suitable for young folk. Class B.

**"Female Fugitive" with Evelyn Venable, Craig Reynolds and Reed Hadley**

(Monogram, April 6; time, 56 min.)

A fair program melodrama, suitable as a second feature for neighborhood theatres. The attention is held because of one's sympathy for the heroine, who, unaware of her husband's connection with a gang of hijackers and murderers, unwittingly helps him escape from the police, thereby involving herself. One is held in suspense because of the danger to her once she finds out the truth. The hero is a sympathetic character, too, because of his efforts to help the heroine, regardless of the danger to himself.

In the development of the plot, Miss Venable, after learning the truth about her husband (Craig Reynolds), leaves him. She obtains a position as cook at the mountain lodge owned by Reed Hadley, an artist. Hadley is at first suspicious of her, but her charm wins him over and he falls in love with her, as she does with him. She tells him what had happened to her, and he promises to help her, realizing that things looked bad for her because she had helped her husband to escape. Reynolds, still in love with Miss Venable, traces her whereabouts by a picture Hadley had painted of her, and confronts her just as she was leaving with Hadley. A detective, who had used the same means to trace her whereabouts, arrives just in time; he overhears Reynolds clear his wife. Reynolds is shot and killed by the detective just as he was trying to escape. Her name cleared, Miss Venable is free to marry Hadley.

John T. Neville and Bennett R. Cohen wrote the story and screen play; William Nigh directed it, and E. B. Derr produced it. In the cast are John Kelly, Charlotte Treadway, and others.

The shooting makes it unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"College Swing" with Martha Raye, George Burns and Gracie Allen**

(Paramount, April 29; running time, 86 min.)

A very good box-office possibility because of the drawing power of the stars, but only fair in entertainment value. It is a conglomeration of comedy, song and dance, with each star performer doing his or her specialty. In an effort to put each name personality in the spotlight, the producers had to forget about the story; that is, at least, the impression one receives, for the different acts are tied together by an extremely thin plot. Another fault is that the dialogue is stilted, and some of the gags fall flat. The dance numbers, led by Betty Grable and Jackie Coogan, are peppy and may go over with young folk, even though they are presented in a routine manner. Gracie Allen, in her usual nitwit type of role, leads the comedians. One of the most comical situations is that in which she answers questions in an examination by referring to a laundry bill for her answers. Martha Raye and Bob Hope team up well, but they are not helped much by the material.

The action starts in the year 1738, at a small school house. Miss Allen, who had been trying for eight years to pass examinations in order to graduate, is considered a hopeless case. Her irate grandfather then and there decides that if, within the following two hundred years, Miss Allen or her descendants should fail to pass examinations, his fortune would go to charities; but if one should pass, the fortune would go to him or to her. In the year 1938, the score still stood against Miss Allen and her descendants, for the last of the clan (again played by Miss Allen) was a hopeless student. Since the time limit for the disposal of the estate was drawing near, Bob Hope decides to help Miss Allen, hoping thereby to enrich himself. He uses devious means to help her pass, such as reading the examination papers in advance and writing the answers out for her, and broadcasting answers to her by means of a pocket radio. And so Miss Allen passes and inherits the college. She makes many drastic changes, replacing the regular professors with nitwits. Edward Everett Horton, a lady hater, trustee of the estate, arrives at the college; he falls in love with Miss Allen. She decides to turn the college back to the regular professors, and to devote her time to Horton.

Frederick Hazlitt Brennan adapted it from an idea by Ted Losser. Walter De Leon and Francis Martin wrote the screenplay, and Raoul Walsh directed it. In the cast are Ben Blue, John Payne, Skinnay Ennis, Florence George, St. Brendan's Choristers, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



## PRODUCER LOBBYING PROVING A BOOMERANG

For several weeks the Hays Association has been conducting an intensive campaign of propaganda for the purpose of defeating the Neely-Pettengill Bill. This campaign was intensified to the highest limit several days ago when Mr. Hays, evidently convinced that the Bill cannot be defeated in the House of Representatives, decided to concentrate his efforts in the Senate: sending a list of the names of seventy-five Senators to the most prominent members of his organization, he urged them to write strong letters to these Senators, requesting the defeat of the Neely Bill, and to induce also every one of their friends and of their prominent stars to do likewise.

It is reported that the first letters to be received by these Senators after such "last-minute call" were from Harold Lloyd and Walt Disney.

Harrison's Reports has learned authoritatively that the supporters of the Bill are keeping a careful check on the producer activities. Reproductions of letters sent out from the Hays office as well as from producer-distributor organizations, and of trade paper articles bearing on the subject, have been laid before interested members of the Senate. One of such letters was from ex-Governor Milliken, of the Hays office, sent to independent theatre owners of the Boston territory. In the last paragraph, Mr. Milliken said:

"It is the opinion of the lawyers that because of the criminal penalties attached to the bill, exhibitors have no option to waive any of its provisions and therefore you would have to lease your pictures one by one after you had seen each of them in the projection room of the company's branch exchange in Boston."

It is reported that some Senators could not understand why a document such as this should have gone out of the Hays office when there is nothing in the Bill to prohibit an exhibitor from booking every picture a producer has produced, in block form. These and other Senators then began to understand why they had received letters from theatre owners expressing their opposition to the bill, on grounds not justified by the language of the bill.

This activity of the producers through the Hays Association may have but one consequence if the Bill should be defeated: the exhibitor leaders intend to bring a suit against the producers, attacking block booking as being the result of "common action." The evidence of cooperation among them in the defeat of the Bill, which these leaders have gathered carefully, will be sufficient, they assert, to establish an agreement among them "to enforce, maintain and defend the practice of block-booking." The case brought by the Federal Trade Commission eighteen years ago, which was decided against the Commission, will not save them because, in that case, only one company was involved, and there could not, therefore, have been a "common action," whereas this time all the companies are involved.

It begins to look as if the major companies, by engaging in a strenuous campaign to defeat the Bill, have made a serious mistake. Their efforts have already reacted against them in the Senate, and they may find themselves entangled in legal difficulties to boot.

## THE HEIGHT OF INCONSISTENCY

The April 15 issue of *The Rocky Mountain Theatre News*, house organ of Theatre Owners and Managers of Rocky Mountain Region, contains an article to the effect that Mr. A. P. Archer, president of the association, in his address to the members who met on April 11, at the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Denver, condemned definite producer abuses. The article says that Mr. Archer summarized these abuses as follows:

- "1. Enforced compulsory 'block-booking.'
- "2. Discrimination in enforcing against some and not others.
- "3. Selective selling to some and not to others.
- "4. Selling contracts which specify only production numbers or groups of pictures, without titles, stars or stories.
- "5. Soliciting contracts on the basis of appealing advertising and work sheets, further stipulating the same shall be no part of the contract.

"6. Playing off all high price brackets or pictures before the end of the contract, then failing to deliver the full number of pictures in the lower brackets.

"7. Refusing to deliver pictures with box office stars, which were included in the work sheet, completed or capable of being completed during the contract term and using them as an inducement in selling contracts for a new season.

"8. Enforced compulsory selling of unneeded, unnecessary short subjects, newsreels, score charges on (or?) weekly pay plans, resulting in the payment of countless thousands of dollars by exhibitors with no product or service of any kind used or received.

"9. Enforced compulsory 'block-booking' of poor pictures, skimming the cream from the blocks for roadshowing or designating them as 'specials.'

"10. Failure to recognize and adhere to the principles of fair dealing with customers who pay their bills."

In reading Mr. Archer's enumerated producer abuses one would naturally form the conclusion that Mr. Archer is a rabid supporter of the Neely-Pettengill Bill, and that he was addressing a gathering of supine exhibitors with a view to stirring them up into action in favor of the Bill. But such is not the case, for on the same page there is given the information that on the same day that he made his eloquent speech a resolution was passed condemning the Bill. On what grounds, do you think? Let us copy from the fourth and the fifth "Whereases":

"Whereas, it is recognized that there is a certain amount of compulsory block booking, blind selling and other existing evils in the industry, but it is also a fact that all well-informed and unbiased exhibitors are fully convinced that the said Bill will not rectify or cure the existing evils in the industry and that many of the conclusions or alleged facts in the report are groundless or erroneous and that much of the testimony, purported to have been taken by said committee or incorporated in said report, was from individuals, organizations, or societies which had apparently no practical knowledge of the industry or of its problems, and it would seem that these parties did not have the slightest idea of the ways and means to correct whatever problems or evils that may now exist in said industry; and

"Whereas, it is fully realized that all of the major evils or problems in the industry can be corrected, by or through the unselfish cooperation of the producers, distributors, exhibitors and others directly interested therein, without the interference, hindrance, annoyance, and chaos that would result from the passage of the said bill."

This resolution represents the sentiments of Mr. Archer, who brought them out in the course of his speech.

By comparing the list of the things he complains about with the language of the fourth and the fifth paragraphs of the resolution, you will, I am sure, be struck, as I have been struck, with his inconsistency. In his speech to the exhibitors, he admitted, what every Allied leader has been admitting all along, that these abuses exist, and while the Allied leaders have no way of correcting them other than through some piece of legislation such as the Neely Bill, Mr. Archer says that these evils can be corrected by "unselfish" cooperation.

Does Mr. Archer know that the Allied leaders have tried repeatedly to cooperate, "unselfishly," with the producers but that their efforts have come to nothing? The 5-5-5 conference was the last attempt. Since the producers will not, then, show an "unselfish" spirit of cooperation, how is he going to induce them to do it?

The sad part about it is the fact that supposedly intelligent exhibitors listened to his talk but apparently offered no objections to it. They have been fed with such "blarney" as Mr. Archer's for years, but little by little they are shoved out of business, and they can do nothing about it. Yet when a piece of legislation to eliminate some of these abuses is proposed, they listen to leaders such as Archer and oppose its enactment.

It is not Mr. Archer alone who is really inconsistent; it is also those exhibitors who listen to him as well as to all other opponents of the Bill. They don't seem to want to be helped.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XX

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 1938

No. 18

## The Accuracy of the 1937-38 Season's Forecasts

Of the 189 stories that were forecast in the beginning of the season, seventy-one have been produced up to the time before going to press.

The average accuracy of the Forecaster this season has been 88.62%.

The following table indicates the number of pictures forecast out of each company's works, and the percentage of accuracy.

## PERCENTAGE OF ACCURACY

	Number of		
	Pictures	Points	Percentage
Columbia .....	5	400	80%
MGM .....	12	1070	89%
Monogram .....	2	180	90%
Paramount .....	2	170	85%
Republic .....	2	180	90%
RKO .....	17	1370	80%
20th C-Fox .....	4	400	100%
United Artists ...	8	760	95%
Universal .....	8	725	90%
Warner-F. N. ...	9	860	95%
Total .....	69	6115 (Aver.)	88.62%

The Forecaster went 100% wrong on only one picture—"The Awful Truth."

Two pictures have not been counted in: "Federal Bullets" (Monogram) and "On Such A Night" (Paramount), because they have been altered radically; for this reason, the Forecaster took neither credit nor demerit for them.

## Columbia

"Start Cheering," forecast under the title "College Hero": The forecast said: "The material is only fair and Columbia should make with it a program picture of a quality either fair or fairly good, with its box office performance depending on the leads." The picture was produced as a musical comedy, but so far as the story is concerned the forecast was 100% accurate; and since no box office names appeared in the picture, the box office performance has been from fairly good to good. Accuracy on the whole 100%.

"She Married an Artist," forecast as, "I Married an Artist." The forecast said: "There isn't much to this material . . . should make a picture fair in quality." The picture turned out fair in quality. Accuracy 100%.

"No Time to Marry," forecast as "The Night Before." The forecast said: "This is nice comedy material . . . properly cast and directed, the material should make a program picture either fairly good or good in quality." The picture turned out a "mildly amusing comedy." Accuracy 100%.

"The Awful Truth." Although the material was altered considerably in the treatment, the forecaster considers itself as having been wrong 100%.

"There's Always A Woman." The forecast said: "Good murder mystery material. . . . It should make a program picture of good quality, with its box-office performance depending on the popularity of the leads." It turned out highly entertaining, and, since the leads are played by Joan Blondell and Melvyn Douglas, it should do well at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

Average accuracy 80%.

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"Man Proof," forecast as "The Four Marys." The forecast said: "This is a sophisticated drama, centering around unsympathetic characters. . . . Metro will probably give this a lavish background, and so it will turn out a good picture. As to the box-office possibilities, that is another thing; considering the popularity of the four stars, it should draw very well." In quality, the picture turned out exactly as forecast. But its box-office performance has been good-fair. Considering, however, that Walter Pidgeon was substituted for Melvyn Douglas the prediction was right. Accuracy 100%.

"Big City." The forecast said: "The story should make a good picture in quality, either good or very good in box office performance." The picture turned out exactly as predicted, both in quality as well as box-office performance. Accuracy 100%.

"Mannequin." The forecast said: "The story is fair, and should make a picture fair or fairly good in quality, but since no cast has been announced its box-office possibilities cannot be appraised." The picture turned out good in quality. Accuracy 80%.

"The Bride Wore Red." The forecast said: "MGM has a good property in this story and should make either a very good or an excellent picture out of it, in quality as well as box-office performance." The picture turned out good in quality as well as box-office performance. Accuracy 80%.

"Rosalie." The forecast said: "The material is charming, and should make a musical comedy either good or very good in quality, with similar box-office results." The picture turned out poor in story values, but Very Good-Good at the box office. Accuracy 70%.

"Live, Love and Learn." The forecast said: "Nice story material. . . . It should make either a good or a very good picture, with similar box-office results if popular players are given the leading parts." The picture turned out good, and its box-office results have been good-fair. Accuracy 80%.



"Double Wedding." The forecast said: "A very good piece of property, which should make a picture either very good or excellent in quality as well as box-office appeal with these two stars." The picture turned out fair in entertaining values, but performed Very Good to Good at the box-office. Accuracy 80%.

"Navy Blue and Gold." The forecast said: "Very good story material. . . . MGM has an excellent piece of property in this novel and should make with it a picture either very good or excellent in quality, its box-office performance depending a great deal on the popularity of the leads." The picture turned out exactly as predicted: Accuracy 100%.

"Conquest," forecast as "Marie Walewska." The forecast said: "There is powerful material in this book. . . . With Greta Garbo and Charles Boyer in the leading parts, MGM should make a picture either good or very good in quality, the box-office performance depending on the popularity of costume pictures." The picture turned out good, in quality as well as box-office performance. Accuracy 100%.

"Madame X." The forecast said: "The story is the kind that always makes a fine picture when properly handled . . . should again turn out to be either very good or excellent, with good to very good box-office results even with a second-rate star." The picture turned out as predicted. Accuracy 100%.

"The Girl of the Golden West." The forecast said: "MGM is announcing that many alterations will be made in the story . . . it is difficult to say in advance what the picture will turn out to be. In all probability, however, it will be good in quality, with good to very good box-office results." Accuracy 100%.

"Test Pilot." The forecast said: "Fair story material, which should make either a fair or fairly good melodrama, with good to very good results at the box-office because of the two stars." The story was changed around considerably, and the picture turned out excellent, with excellent possibilities at the box-office. Accuracy, therefore, 80%.

Average accuracy 89%.

### Monogram

"A Bride for Henry." The forecast said: "The material, properly handled, should make a comedy either good or very good in quality." The picture turned out just fairly good. Accuracy, therefore, 80%.

"Federal Bullets." Since the story was altered completely, neither a credit is taken, nor a demerit is given.

"The Outer Gate." The forecast said: "Monogram should alter Bob's characterization. . . . If such an alteration . . . should be made, the picture should turn out anywhere from good to very good in quality. Without the alterations suggested, it should turn out only a fair picture." Since no alteration was made, the picture turned out only fair. Accuracy, therefore, 100%.

Average accuracy 90%.

### Paramount

"On Such a Night," forecast as "Such a Night." The story was altered radically so the Forecaster takes neither credit nor any demerit for the fact that the picture turned out poor.

"Blonde Trouble." The forecast said: "It may make a fair picture in quality, with fair results at the box-office, because the cast is not a good box-office bet." Exactly as predicted. Accuracy 100%.

"The Barrier." The forecast said: "Paramount has an excellent piece of property . . . no reason why it should not turn out very good in quality, with similar box-office results. . . ." The picture turned out to be fairly good in quality, with good-fair results at the box-office. Accuracy 70%.

Average accuracy 85%.

### Republic

"The Duke Comes Back." The forecast said: "The picture should turn out good in quality, its box-office performance depending on the popularity of the leads." The picture did turn out as predicted. Accuracy 100%.

"Prison Nurse." The forecast said: "The story should make a picture of either good or very good quality." It turned out fairly good. Accuracy 80%.

Average accuracy 90%.

### RKO

"Radio City Revels." The forecast said: "Amusing story material, which . . . should make a picture either good or very good in quality as well as box-office performance." The picture turned out fairly good, and took fairly well at the box-office. Accuracy 80%.

"Wise Girl," forecast as "The Female of the Species." The forecast said: "Fair story material—fairly good to good picture, with good box-office results." The picture turned out good in quality, and took fairly well at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"Hitting a New High," forecast as "Born to Sing." The forecast said: "Amusing story material . . . should make a picture either good or very good in quality, its box-office performance depending on Miss Pons' popularity." The picture turned out fair, and took fairly well at the box-office. Accuracy 80%.

"Maid's Night Out," forecast as "Certified." The forecast said: "Light but nice story material . . . should make a fairly good to good program picture." The picture turned out a mild comedy, which took fairly well at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"Danger Patrol," forecast as "Highway to Hell." The forecast said: "Fairly good material . . . fairly good program picture." The picture turned out fair entertainment, with fair-poor results at the box-office. Accuracy 60%.

"Everybody's Doing It," forecast as "No Groom to Bride Her." The forecast said: "Good picture material, with undeterminable box-office result because no cast had been announced at the time." The picture turned out mediocre, with fair-poor box-office results. Accuracy 60%.



"She's Got Everything," forecast as "She's Got That Swing." The forecast said: "Light but nice material, which should . . . make a picture either fairly good or good in quality, with possible similar box-office results." The picture turned out fairly entertaining, and took fairly at the box-office. Accuracy 80%.

"Forty Naughty Girls." The forecast said: "Fair or fairly good in quality as well as box-office results." The picture turned out a fair comedy melodrama, with fair-poor box-office results. Accuracy 60%.

"Saturday's Heroes." The forecast said: "Fair story—fairly good to good picture." The picture turned out fair, and fair-poor at the box-office. Accuracy 80%.

"Fight for Your Lady," The forecast said: "Fairly good to good picture, with good box-office results." The picture turned out good, and has had good-fair box-office results. Accuracy 100%.

"Quick Money," forecast as "Going, Going, Gone." The forecast said: "Fair comedy material, with fair or fairly good box-office results." The picture turned out fair entertainment, with fair-poor box-office results. Accuracy 80%.

"Annapolis Salute." The forecast said: "Fair or fairly good program story material." The picture turned out fair entertainment, with fair-poor box office results. Accuracy 80%.

"Fit for a King." The forecast said: "It should make a picture good in quality, with box-office results depending on Joe Brown's popularity with the patrons of each theatre." The picture turned out fair, with similar box-office results. Accuracy 70%.

"The Life of the Party." The forecast said: "A picture good or very good in quality as well as box-office performance." The picture turned out good, but its box-office performance has been fair. Accuracy 60%.

"Stage Door." The forecast said: "Excellent to very good, both in quality as well as box-office performance." The picture turned out exactly as forecast. Accuracy 100%.

"There Goes the Groom," forecast as "Don't Forget to Remember." The forecast said: "Fair to fairly good, in quality as well as box-office performance." The picture turned out fairly entertaining, and has had fair box-office results. Accuracy 80%.

"Go Chase Yourself," forecast as "Rolling Stones." The forecast said: ". . . should make a picture either good or very good in quality, with fairly good to good results at the box-office." It turned out as predicted. Accuracy 100%.

Average accuracy 80%.

### **Twentieth Century-Fox**

"Heidi." The forecast said: ". . . an excellent piece of property and, . . . there is not the slightest doubt that he (the producer) will make an excellent picture, from the quality point of view as well as the box-office performance." Accuracy 100%.

"Lancer Spy." The forecast said: ". . . should make a picture either good or very good in quality. As to its box-office performance, this will depend

on the scale on which it will be produced, for the box-office value of the stars is no more than good." Since the production was not too lavish, it did from good to poor at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"Thin Ice." The forecast said: ". . . should make a picture either good or very good in quality, with anywhere from good to excellent in box-office performance." Accuracy 100%.

"In Old Chicago." The forecast said: ". . . an excellent piece of property . . . should make a picture anywhere from very good to excellent in quality as well as box-office performance." Accuracy 100%.

Accuracy 100%.

### **United Artists**

"Dead End." The forecast said: ". . . there is dramatic force . . . the action is kept moving at a fast pace . . . it should turn out excellent for entertainment of the type, with possibly very good to excellent results at the box-office." Accuracy 100%.

"Hurricane." The forecast said: "The melodramatic value of this story lies chiefly in the hurricane scenes . . . the picture will, no doubt, please melodrama-loving audiences well, and even very well. . . . In all probabilities the picture will be received either well or very well in downtown theatres in big cities. . . ." Accuracy 100%.

"Prisoner of Zenda." The forecast said: "The story is charming. . . . But costume pictures do not go over so well . . . though it should turn out either good or very good in quality, may not perform as well at the box-office—perhaps from fairly well to well." The picture turned out very good and did from excellent to very good at the box-office. Accuracy, therefore, 80%.

"Stand In." The forecast said: "Fair program material, with a box-office performance measured in each locality by Mr. Howard's popularity. . . ." The picture did just good at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"Stella Dallas." The forecast said: "Sam Goldwyn has excellent material in this piece of property . . . and there is no reason why he should not make with it a picture of excellent quality, with very good to excellent results at the box-office." It turned out excellent in quality and did very well at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"I Met My Love Again," forecast as "Carelessly." The forecast said: "The material . . . should make a picture of good quality, performing at the box-office either well or fairly well. The star is second-third rate, so far as the box-office is concerned." The picture turned out exactly as predicted, with good to fair results at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"Adventures of Tom Sawyer." The forecast said: "In all probabilities the picture will turn out either good or very good in quality. In down-town houses in big cities, it may make a poor showing, except perhaps during the matinees; in the smaller towns, it should take either well or fairly well." Accuracy 80%.



"Adventures of Marco Polo." The forecast said: "In all probability the picture will turn out very entertaining for high class patronage, and either fair or fairly well amusing for the rough trade. As to its box-office performance, it will, of course, be either good or very good, on account of the popularity of Mr. Cooper." The picture turned out exactly as predicted, and should take at the box-office as stated. Accuracy 100%.

Average accuracy 95%.

### Universal

"Behind the Mike." The forecast said: "... the story cannot make any more than a fair to fairly good picture." It turned out only fair, and did from fair to poor at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"The Lady Fights Back." The forecast said: "... should make a melodrama fairly good to good in quality, with fair to fairly good box-office results." It turned out fair in quality, and did fair at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"100 Men and a Girl." The forecast said: "As it stands, the story cannot make more than a fairly good to good program picture in quality, with a box-office value anywhere from good to very good." The picture turned out excellent, with very good results at the box-office. Accuracy 70%.

"Prescription For Romance." The forecast said: "The story is not so interesting; it should make a program picture, fair in quality, and, without popular players, fair or fair-poor in box-office performance." The quality and box-office performance were exactly as predicted. Accuracy 100%.

"Reported Missing." The forecast said: "... the story will make only a program melodrama, of a fairly good to good quality. As to its box-office worth, it may prove to be fair or fair to poor." Accuracy 100%.

"Midnight Intruder," forecast as "The Welcome Imposter." The forecast said: "Just one of those stories that make second program features, of a quality either fairly good or fair, and of a box-office merit anywhere from fair to poor if ordinary players are given the leading parts." The picture turned out pretty good and did from good to fair at the box-office. Accuracy, therefore, 75%.

"Mad About Music." The forecast said: "... the picture will turn out of the same quality as 'Three Smart Girls,' and even better. From very good to excellent." Accuracy 100%.

"Goodbye Broadway," forecast as "Shannons of Broadway." The forecast said: "... the picture should turn out fairly good to good in quality, of program grade, with its box-office merit depending on the popularity of the leading players." The picture turned out fair, with better than average box-office possibilities because Alice Brady is starred. Accuracy 80%.

Average accuracy 90%.

### Warner-First National

"First Lady." The forecast said: "But as the material now stands the picture will prove suitable mostly for high-class audiences, for there is not much emotional appeal in the acts of the characters ... should turn out from good to very good, for week-run theatres, and from fairly good to good for small town theatres, both in quality as well as box-office performance." Accuracy 100%.

"Life of Emile Zola." The forecast said: "The story material is ... powerful, and Mr. Muni fits the part of Zola exceedingly well ... there is no reason why the picture should not turn out excellent, or at least very good, in quality and box-office performance." Accuracy 100%.

"Perfect Specimen." The forecast said: "From fairly good to good in quality, and from good to very good in box-office performance." The picture turned out good and did very good at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"Tovarich." The forecast said: "This story ... seems to possess the elements that will go to make an amusing as well as deeply moving comedy-drama, of a very good quality; with such stars as Colbert and Boyer it should draw to an equal degree." The picture turned out only good in quality, and did from very good to good at the box-office. Accuracy, therefore, 80%.

"Swing Your Lady." The forecast said: "... a comedy, of the slapstick variety, either mildly or well entertaining. ... From fairly good to good in quality, its box-office strength in each theatre depending on the popularity of Pat O'Brien and of Joan Blondell." The picture turned out in quality as predicted; and since O'Brien and Miss Blondell were not in the cast it did just good to fair at the box-office. Accuracy 100%.

"Gold Is Where You Find It." The forecast said: "... the picture should turn out beautiful. The story itself, however, should make a fairly good to good entertainment, with similar box-office results." It turned out exactly as predicted. Accuracy 100%.

"A Slight Case of Murder." The forecast said: "Strong melodramatic material, which should make a picture anywhere from good to very good in effectiveness." It turned out very good. Accuracy 100%.

"Back In Circulation," forecast as "Angle Shooter." The forecast said: "... the chances are that the picture will turn out to be no more than fair or fairly good in quality, its box-office performance in each theatre depending on the popularity of the leads." The picture turned out better than predicted. Accuracy 80%.

"Jezebel." The forecast said: "Poor entertainment for the masses, but from good to very good for those who like pictures with Bette Davis in a vicious part. It should draw only fair in the small towns, and well in first-run theatres in big cities." Accuracy 100%.

Average accuracy 95%.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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### An Appraisal of the Ability of Unit Producers—No. 3

As indicated in the first two articles, "Q" means "Quality," and "B"—"Box-Office Performance." Thus, (Q-G::B-GF) would mean: "Quality, Good; Box-Office Performance, Good-Fair."

#### Paramount

FRANK LLOYD, 1: "Wells Fargo" (Q-VG::B-E-VG).

Very good showing.

ALBERT LEWIN, 1: "True Confession" (Q-VG::B-G).

Very good showing.

CECIL B. DEMILLE, 1: "The Buccaneer" (Q-G::B-EG).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "The Plainsman" (Q-VG::B-E-VG).

Good to very good showing.

LEWIS E. GENSLER, 1: "Artists and Models" (Q-G::B-VG-G).

In the 1936-37 season, Mr. Gensler produced: "Big Broadcast of 1937" (Q-G::B-E-VG).

This producer's showing has so far been good.

HARLAN THOMPSON, 2: "Big Broadcast of 1938" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported); "Romance in the Dark" (Q-G::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Wives Never Know" (Q-P::B-F); "College Holiday" (Q-G::B-E); "Champagne Waltz" (Q-FG::B-G).

Good showing.

HARRY SHERMAN, 1: "The Barrier" (Q-G::B-GF).

Mr. Sherman has been making westerns for Paramount, and his showing on those pictures has been very good. His work in "The Barrier" was good.

ARTHUR HORNBLow, JR., 1: "High, Wide and Handsome" (Q-G::B-G).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Three Married Men" (Q-P::B-FP); "Swing High Swing Low" (Q-F::B-VG-G); "Waikiki Wedding" (Q-G::B-VG); "Easy Living" (Q-VG::B-VG-G).

His entire showing has been fairly good.

EDWARD T. LOWE, 1: "Dangerous to Know" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported).

Fairly good showing.

ERNST LUBITSCH, 2: "Angel" (Q-FG::G-GP); "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

This producer's showing has been fair.

LUCIEN HUBBARD, 1: "Ebb Tide" (Q-F::B-VG-F).

Fair showing.

GROVER JONES, 1: "Souls At Sea" (Q-F::B-VG).

Fair showing.

BENJAMIN GLAZER, 1: "Double or Nothing" (Q-VG::B-G).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Lady Be Careful" (Q-P::B-GF); "Internes Can't Take Money" (Q-G::B-G); "Mountain Music" (Q-F::B-G); "Exclusive" (Q-F::B-G).

Fair showing.

GEORGE M. ARTHUR, 1: "Her Jungle Love" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Last Train From Madrid" (Q-F::B-FP).

Fair showing.

FANCHON, 1: "Thrill of a Lifetime" (Q-F::B-P).

In the 1936-37 season, she produced: "Turn Off the Moon" (Q-F::B-GF).

Fair showing.

EMANUEL COHEN, 3: "On Such a Night" (Q-F::B-FP); "Love on Toast" (Q-P::B-FP); "Every Day's a Holiday" (Q-F::B-GF).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Go West Young Man" (Q-F::B-G); "Mind Your Own Business" (Q-G::B-FP); "Outcast" (Q-F::B-F); "Girl From Scotland Yard" (Q-FP::B-FP); "Midnight Madonna" (Q-F::B-F).

This producer's showing has been fair to poor.

GEORGE AUERBACH, 1: "She Asked For It" (Q-P::B-P).

Poor showing.

MEL SHAUER, 1: "This Way Please" (Q-P::B-F).

Poor showing.

B. P. SCHULBERG, 2: "She's No Lady" (Q-P::B-F); "Blossoms on Broadway" (Q-P::B-P).

His showing has been poor this season.

In the 1936-37 season Mr. Schulberg produced: "Wedding Present" (Q-FG::B-GF); "A Doctor's Diary" (Q-G::B-G); "John Meade's Woman" (Q-F::B-GF); "Her Husband Lies" (Q-G::B-F); "The Great Gambini" (Q-FG::B-F). (Fairly good showing last season.)

G.M.O., 11: "Blonde Trouble" (Q-FP::B-F); "Sophie Lang Goes West" (Q-F::B-FP); "Bulldog Drummond Comes Back" (Q-F::B-FP); "Partners in Crime" (Q-P::B-FP); "Hold 'Em Navy" (Q-FG::B-F); "Night Club Scandal" (Q-FG::B-F); "Daughter of Shanghai" (Q-F::B-F); "Bulldog Drummond's Revenge" (Q-F::B-F); "Scandal Street" (Q-FP::B-F); "Bulldog Drummond's Peril" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported); "Tip Off Girls" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, it produced: "Bulldog Drummond Escapes" (Q-F::B-F); "Clarence" (Q-P::B-P); "Murder Goes to College" (Q-FP::B-FP); "Crime Nobody Saw" (Q-F::B-P); "King of Gamblers" (Q-F::B-F); "Night of Mystery" (Q-P::B-FP); "Hotel Haywire" (Q-P::B-FP); "Wild Money" (Q-F::B-FP).

No information is available as to who this "G.M.O." producer is. It may be an aggregation of producers; then again it may be an individual. But whichever the case, a rating is given for your guidance.

Fair to poor showing.

#### RKO

PANDRO S. BERMAN, 1: "Stage Door" (Q-E::B-EG).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "The Big Game" (Q-G::B-F); "Winterset" (Q-VG::B-GF); "Quality Street" (Q-F::B-F); "Soldier and the Lady" (Q-FG::B-GF); "Shall We Dance" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "Damsel In Distress" (Q-G::B-G); "That Girl From Paris" (Q-VG::B-G).

Very good showing.

(Continued on last page)



## **"The Adventures of Robin Hood" with Errol Flynn, Olivia DeHavilland, Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains**

(First National, May 14; running time, 102 min.)

Excellent entertainment! Not only does it show great care in production, that is, in lavish settings, fine technicolor photography, expert direction and acting, but also in the manner in which the story has been developed, for action has not been sacrificed in an attempt to stress the beauties of technicolor photography. Adventure, romance, comedy, and human appeal have been skilfully blended to give satisfaction on all counts. Needless to say, it holds one in tense suspense throughout, because of the constant danger to the hero, who dares to defy the tyrannical nobles in an effort to bring about justice for the common people. In spite of the fact that his many escapes are nothing short of miracles, the way he accomplishes them are so thrilling, that audiences will overlook the fact that they are far-fetched. The duel in the closing scenes between the hero and his arch enemy is the most exciting ever screened. And for color and excitement, audiences will long remember the archery tournament in which many men compete:—

When word is brought to Nottingham Castle that King Richard (Ian Hunter), while on his way home from the Crusades, had been captured and was being held for ransom, his scheming brother Prince John (Rains) decides to take over the regency. Having tortured the Saxons during his brother's absence, by imposing unreasonable taxes on them, he decides, with the help of the traitorous Sir Guy of Gisbourne (Rathbone), to levy even more taxes by pretending that the money was needed to pay the ransom. Many Saxons are killed and tortured. Sir Robin (Flynn), whose estates and title had been taken from him by Prince John, and who had turned outlaw to help the oppressed, warns the Normans that he would take a Norman life for each Saxon life; and he carries out his threats. Together with his small band of followers, Robin Hood steals from the rich to help the poor. Prince John is enraged; he orders his men to kill Robin Hood, but to no avail, for each time Robin is captured he manages to escape. And Robin places himself in the way of danger just to see Maid Marian (Miss DeHavilland), the King's ward, with whom he had fallen in love. At first she opposed him; but after learning the truth, she tries to help him, particularly because she had fallen in love with him. King Richard and a few followers return to England disguised in clerical robes; with the help of Robin Hood and his men, King Richard is successful in obtaining entrance to the palace in time to prevent Prince John from proclaiming himself King. In a duel with Robin Hood, Sir Guy is killed. And the King banishes his brother and the other traitors, bringing peace and contentment to his subjects. As a reward for his bravery, Robin Hood receives back his title and estates, and obtains the King's consent to his marriage with Maid Marian.

The plot was based on ancient Robin Hood legends; Norman Reilly Raine and Seton I. Miller wrote the screen play, Michael Curtiz and William Keighley directed it, and Henry Blanke produced it. In the cast are Alan Hale, Patric Knowles, Una O'Connor, Eugene Pallette, Herbert Mundin, and others.

Class A.

## **"Call of the Yukon" with Richard Arlen, Beverly Roberts and Lyle Talbot**

(Republic, May 16; time, 70 min.)

Set in the Alaskan Eskimo country, this melodrama, in which animals play as important a part as humans, is fairly good entertainment for lovers of outdoor action pictures. There are animals fights, a snow avalanche, and even an ice-break, in which both the hero and the heroine are caught. Its appeal will, however, be directed more to men and to children than to women, who may be sickened by some of the situations, such as the one in which the heroine, disgusted at the sight of the hero's roasting the carcass of an animal that a dog had killed, refuses to accept the food when he offers it to her. The hero is, until almost the end, an unpleasant character because of his wild actions and callousness; however, his fearlessness makes one feel some respect for him. The comedy is provoked by the playfulness of two bear cubs:—

Beverly Roberts, who had been living in a small Eskimo village in Alaska, in order to get material for

a new novel, refuses to leave the village even though the inhabitants, fearing starvation and attack by wild dogs, had deserted it. Arlen, a trapper, compels her to leave with him. They meet with many mishaps, and during a snow avalanche lose their sled with a large portion of their supplies. They are followed by Swift Lightning, a wolf-dog, responsible for most of the animal killings, and his mate Firefly, a tame Collie dog. Miss Roberts, who had declared her love for Arlen, is disgusted at his idea of killing the dogs for food. They finally find a deserted cabin where Arlen, enraged at Miss Roberts' change in manner, tries to force his attentions on her. Just then, Lyle Talbot, a fur trader in love with Miss Roberts, having heard that the two had reached the cabin, arrives with supplies. The two men have a terrific fight in which Arlen comes out the victor; but he, thinking Miss Roberts loved Talbot, decides to leave during a storm. Miss Roberts follows him, and finds him attempting to lift a tree that had fallen on Swift Lightning; she helps him save the dog. She tells Arlen she really loved him and wanted to stay with him.

The plot was adapted from the novel "Swift Lightning," by James Oliver Curwood. Gertrude Orr and William Bartlett wrote the screen play, B. Reeves Eason directed it, and Armand Schaefer produced it. In the cast are Mala, Garry Owen, and others.

It is doubtful if children will understand the hero's actions; therefore, suitability, Class A.

## **"Four Men and a Prayer" with Loretta Young, Richard Greene, David Niven, George Sanders and William Henry**

(20th Century-Fox, April 29; time, 85 min.)

This adventure murder-mystery melodrama, tinged with comedy, is good mass entertainment; it should thrill particularly action-loving fans. Although somewhat far-fetched in spots, it holds one's attention throughout; this is owing to the sympathy one feels for the hero and his three brothers, whose desire to clear the name of their father leads them into many adventures. The tension on several occasions is relieved by the amusing actions on the part of David Niven, one of the sons, who provokes laughter without appearing too silly. One of the situations is so gory that it may sicken some spectators: it shows soldiers mowing down with a machine gun a whole group of men and women rebels. But the scenes of fighting are handled effectively. The romantic touch is provided by Loretta Young, whose love for one of the sons (Richard Greene) impels her to follow him on his hazardous investigations. Intelligent audiences may be amused at the situation where Miss Young, dressed in a sheer evening gown, runs through streets where a revolution was raging, avoiding stray bullets, without even spoiling her dress or her haircomb:—

Dishonorably discharged from the British Army service in India after many years of distinguished service, C. Aubrey Smith writes to his four sons—Greene, Niven, George Sanders, and William Henry—urging them to meet him at their estate to talk the matter over. He tells them that he had been framed, and had evidence to prove that the conspirators were working for a munitions concern; he promises to go into the matter in detail directly after dinner. But he is murdered before he had a chance to give his sons the information; the papers are stolen. The sons set out to clear their father's name and to avenge his death. Their search narrows down to Reginald Denny, a retired army officer, who had been the chief witness against their father, and to his companion (Alan Hale). They finally force Denny to confess that he had forged the document that had convicted their father; but before he could name his chief, he is murdered. Greene, who was in love with Miss Young, is heartbroken when he learns that her father (Berton Churchill) was the head of the munitions concern. Churchill swears that he knew nothing of the underhanded tactics used by Hale, his agent. The sons finally corner Hale; he signs a confession clearing their father's name and confessing to the murder. With the case cleared, Greene and Miss Young look forward to marriage.

David Garth wrote the story, and Richard Sherman, Sonya Levien, and Walter Ferris, the screen play; John Ford directed it, and Kenneth Macgowan produced it. In the cast are J. Edward Bromberg, John Carradine, Barry Fitzgerald, and others.

Class A.



### "Stolen Heaven" with Olympe Bradna, Gene Raymond and Lewis Stone

(Paramount, May 13; time, 87 min.)

Fair for the masses, with a stronger appeal for class audiences because of the excellent music that is played throughout. The story itself is just another crook melodrama; but it rises above the average picture of its type because of the music and the natural way in which it is interpolated in the plot. This is done by having the crooks (Gene Raymond and Olympe Bradna) take refuge in the forest home of a famous pianist (Lewis Stone), who, unaware of their identity, gives them shelter. The story at this point naturally turns to the regeneration of Raymond and Miss Bradna, who, too, in their way, help Stone. They do this by giving him back his faith in himself and filling him with a desire to appear once again as a concert pianist before the public. The unpleasant part of the story is the fact that Raymond and Miss Bradna are crooks, who, at the beginning, are shown carrying out their plans to steal jewelry. As the story develops, however, one begins to feel sympathy for Miss Bradna, whose affection for Stone and love of music changes her outlook and fills her with a desire to do better things. Raymond is adamant until almost the end, so that it is difficult for one to warm up to him. But his actions in the end, in deserting his pals, Glenda Farrell and Porter Hall, and returning to Stone's concert in order to give him courage to go on, even though he knew that the police were there and would pick him up, makes one feel more sympathetically towards him. He realizes that Miss Bradna's idea to pay for their crimes with a prison term, and then be free to live a normal life thereafter, was the best, for they were both young and in love and could weather a prison term, knowing that they would be together after it.

Stone plays the part of the musician with distinction, bringing tears to one's eyes on several occasions by his gentleness and understanding.

Andrew Stone wrote the story and directed it; Eave Greene and Frederick Jackson wrote the screen play. In the cast are Douglass Dumbrille, and others.

Since the crooks are reformed in the end, some exhibitors may find it suitable for children. Suitability, therefore, Class A.

### "Moonlight Sonata" with Ignace Jan Paderewski

(Malmar Pictures; running time, 80 min.)

Class audiences and music lovers should be thrilled at the opportunity of listening to and watching the technique of the world renowned concert pianist, Paderewski, who plays four classical selections during the unfolding of the story; needless to say that he plays them magnificently. The picture has been produced lavishly, but it is doubtful if the masses will be as thrilled as the class audiences, for the main lure is Paderewski's playing. The story is simple but slow-moving, and the players, with the exception of Charles Farrell, are practically unknown here. It should draw well at art theatres catering to those who enjoy the unusual in screen entertainment. The regular run theatres will have to use a strong selling campaign, stressing the fact that here is an opportunity for their patrons to see and hear the most famous of the living pianists.

The story opens at a concert hall where Paderewski is giving a recital. A little girl, whose box of candy had rolled to the stage, rushes after it and is greeted by Paderewski, who is pleasantly surprised to find that the child's parents were two persons he knew. After the concert, he relates to a few friends the story of how he had met the young couple. About five years ago, the plane in which he had been travelling to Paris had been forced down in a secluded woody section of Sweden. He, his secretary, and another passenger (Eric Portman), who introduced himself as a nobleman, are found by Farrell, steward of the estate owned by Marie Tempest, a baroness. They are all welcomed by Miss Tempest and her granddaughter (Barbara Greene); both are thrilled at having the famous pianist in their home. Portman fascinates Miss Greene by stories of his travels, and once he starts making love to her she cannot resist him; she imagines herself madly in love with him and consents to run away with him. But Farrell, who really loved Miss Greene, finds out that

Portman was a professional entertainer and was married. Miss Tempest and Farrell have a talk with Portman, who willingly leaves after Miss Tempest gives him a check. Miss Greene, ashamed of herself when she learns the truth, is saddened; she wanders into the garden where Farrell follows her. Just then Paderewski starts playing the beautiful Beethoven "Moonlight Sonata." Under the spell of the music, the lovers are reunited.

Hans Rameau wrote the story, and Edward Knoblock, the screen play; Lothar Mendes directed and produced it. In the cast are Graham Browne, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "International Crime" with Rod LaRocque and Astrid Allwyn

(Grand National, April 22; time, 63 min.)

This comedy-melodrama, another one in the "Shadow" series, is good program fare. The plot is slightly far-fetched; but, since the action is fast, one's attention is held well to the end. The production values are good and the players competent. Most of the comedy is provoked by the nit-wit actions on the part of Astrid Allwyn, secretary to Rod LaRocque; but, since she acts her part with charm, her antics do not become tiresome. There is no romantic interest:—

LaRocque, crime reporter on a newspaper, is in constant conflict with Thomas Jackson, Commissioner of Police, because of his interference in criminal cases, and of his insistence on humiliating Jackson both in his column and over the radio. LaRocque gives his theories on a new murder case and, since they were directly opposite to Jackson's theories, he again antagonizes him. Miss Allwyn, LaRocque's secretary, who insisted on getting some excitement out of her work, follows LaRocque around and at times deters him in his investigations. LaRocque finally solves the murder; he proves that it had been committed by foreign agents, who, having heard that their victim had contemplated financing certain factions in their country, had killed him. LaRocque prevents them from committing another murder, and helps Jackson capture them. At the broadcast, following the arrest, LaRocque wins Jackson's favor by praising him for his brave and competent work in solving the case.

Maxwell Grant wrote the story, and Jack Natteford, the screen play; Charles Lamont directed it, and Max and Arthur Alexander produced it, with Alfred Stern as associate producer. In the cast are Oscar O'Shea, William VonBrincken, William Pawley, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### HOLLYWOOD GRIPPED WITH PANIC

Hollywood has the jitters. Salaries are reduced in some cases, options are disregarded in others, studio hands are discharged, and attempts to effect other economies are made, all with one purpose—to fit the cost of production to the theatre box office. You may imagine, then, how shot the morale of those engaged in production has been. When no one knows on whom the ax will fall next, how do you expect everybody there to feel?

This studio demoralization is already telling upon quality. And there is almost a stoppage of production: W. R. Wilkerson, in the April 18 issue of *Hollywood Reporter*, says:

"With the opening of the studios this morning, the bottom has been hit, for many years, in the production of pictures. . . .

"The slowness of production has not been schemed. Producers have not designed the making of so few pictures, necessitating the employment of so few people. Almost every plant in the business is behind schedule, more so than they have ever been at this time of the year, and this condition frightens producers and their distributors."

How bad is the shortage of pictures may be evidenced by the fact that so many of the major companies have decided to reissue old pictures.

It is hardly likely that there will be any modification of the terms and prices in the existing contracts as a result of the lowering of the quality of the pictures, but you should take this condition into consideration when the salesmen call on you to solicit your business. Tell them that the quality of pictures was bad enough this season, because of the studio demoralization, but during the coming season it will be the worst ever.



CLIFF REID, 2: "Crashing Hollywood" (Q-FG::B-FP); "This Marriage Business" (Q-G::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Without Orders" (Q-G::B-F); "Criminal Lawyr" (Q-F::B-F); "China Passage" (Q-P::B-P); "Behind the Headlines" (Q-G::B-F); "Hideaway" (Q-FP::B-FP); "Bringing Up Baby" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported); "The Man Who Found Himself" (Q-F::B-FP).

Good showing.

EDWARD KAUFMAN, 3: "The Life of the Party" (Q-G::B-F); "Wise Girl" (Q-G::B-GF); "Radio City Revels" (Q-FG::B-GF).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Sinnest Girl in Town" (Q-F::B-GF); "Breakfast For Two" (Q-F::B-GF).

Good this season; fair last season.

FELIX YOUNG, 1: "Joy of Living" (Q-G::B-Not Yet Reported).

Good showing.

SOL LESSER, 1: "Hawaii Calls" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Rainbow on the River" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Make A Wish" (Q-G::B-GF).

Fairly good showing for RKO, poor for 20th Century-Fox.

ROBERT SISK, 6: "Annapolis Salute" (Q-F::B-FP); "Saturday's Heroes" (Q-F::B-FP); "Night Spot" (Q-FP::B-FP); "Maid's Night Out" (Q-FP::B-Not Yet Reported); "Condemned Women" (Q-G::B-Not Yet Reported); "Law of the Underworld" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Don't Tell the Wife" (Q-P::B-P); "Outcasts of Poker Flat" (Q-FP::B-FP); "Border Cafe" (Q-FP::B-FP); "You Can't Beat Love" (Q-F::B-FP); "Flight From Glory" (Q-P::B-F).

Fair showing this season, poor last season.

WILLIAM SISTROM, 2: "Forty Naughty Girls" (Q-F::B-FP); "Everybody's Doing It" (Q-F::B-FP).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Racing Lady" (Q-FP::B-FP); "Too Many Wives" (Q-P::B-P); "There Goes My Girl" (Q-FP::B-GF).

Fair showing this season, poor last season.

JESSE L. LASKY, 2: "Music For Madame" (Q-F::B-F); "Hitting a New High" (Q-FG::B-GF).

Fair showing.

EDWARD SEDGWICK, 1: "Fit For a King" (Q-F::B-F).

Fair showing.

ALBERT LEWIS, 3: "There Goes the Groom" (Q-F::B-F); "Fight For Your Lady" (Q-G::B-GF); "She's Got Everything" (Q-F::B-F).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "The Woman I Love" (Q-P::B-F); "Meet the Missus" (Q-F::B-GF).

Fair showing.

MAURY COHEN, 4: "Living On Love" (Q-FP::B-P); "Danger Patrol" (Q-F::B-FP); "Quick Money" (Q-F::B-FP); "Double Danger" (Q-FP::B-FP).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "You Can't Buy Luck" (Q-FP::B-FP); "The Big Shot" (Q-FP::B-F).

Poor showing.

LEE MARCUS, 1: "High Flyers" (Q-P::B-P).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Mummy's Boys" (Q-P::B-P); "On Again Off Again" (Q-FP::B-FP).

Poor showing.

## ANSWER THIS, MR. SEARS!

As you all, I am sure, know, last January Gradwell Sears, President of Warner-First National Pictures and head of the distribution department of these two companies, went to Hollywood and, while there, he issued a statement to the trade press criticizing you, the theatre owners, accusing you of lacking in the essentials of good showmanship. And his explosion against you was prompted by the fact that many of you resort to giveaways, bank nights, and other exploitation methods, when in his opinion you should do much better if you had confined your efforts to exploiting the pictures themselves.

Early this month he again was in Hollywood and, according to *Daily Variety*, as discussed in the April 23 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, again he issued a statement that he has given you notice to the effect that he will not allow you to show "Robin Hood" on premium nights.

From reading these two statements of his, or accounts of these statements, you might receive the impression that he, Gradwell Sears, is trying to show to you, the independent exhibitors, the proper method of conducting your business, just as his company is doing. Let us see what his company is doing:

I have before me a clipping of an advertisement inserted in the March 10 issue of the *Utica Daily Press*, by the Stanley Theatre, a Warner Bros. house. The following are the items contained in that advertisement:

### "Unit 1

"Today Only—4 Unit Show—Sensational Mystery Drama, 'The Crime of Dr. Hallett,' with Ralph Bellamy and Josephine Hutchinson.

### "Unit 2

"Walter Cassell and Anne Nagel, in 'Romance Road.'

### "Unit 3

"Benny Meroff and His Orchestra.

### "Unit 4

"'What Price Porky,' a colored cartoon.

(Unit 5—at 9 P.M.)

"Tonight on Stage: Basket Ball—Rome Sports Club vs. Savage Arms.

(Unit 6—at 8:45 P.M.)

"325 Tonight. (probably \$325 given away at bank night)

(Unit 7—at 8:50 P.M.)

"Beautiful Baby Grand Piano Given Away."

Does this look as if Gradwell Sears is opposed to premiums? Not satisfied with giving away \$325, his theatre offered also a Baby Grand!

But this is not all! You would think that, when his company inserts into its contracts a clause forbidding the double-features of Warner Bros and First National pictures, all the Warner-First National pictures can stand in a program alone, and that their own theatres play them all. If you think so, you don't know how mistaken you are, for according to my information from the Philadelphia zone, where Warner Bros. has its greatest number of theatres (the old Stanley Mastbaum circuit), the following Warner-First National pictures have never shown their noses into a Warner Theatre:

"Wine, Women and Horses," "Love Is On The Air," "Adventurous Blonde," "Expensive Husbands," "Missing Witness," "She Loved A Fireman," "Sergeant Murphy," "Patient In Room 18," "The Invisible Menace," "He Couldn't Say No," "Penrod And His Twin Brother," and "Accidents Will Happen"—twelve pictures, all but "Expensive Husbands" produced by Bryan Foy.

But Gradwell Sears expects you to play, (or pay for, if you don't play), these pictures, which are not good enough for the theatres of his own company. And yet there are exhibitor leaders who have the gall to stand up before you to tell you that they are opposed to the Neely-Pettengill Bill! How can you listen to them? How can any intelligent human being support so intolerable a system?

Why don't you write to your Senator to acquaint him with this particular Philadelphia situation? I am sure that, if all the Senators knew about it, they would throw all the producer propaganda letters into their waste paper baskets.

## DON'T LOWER YOUR ADMISSION PRICES

Some exhibitors, having become frightened by the great drop in business, have convinced themselves that by lowering the admission prices they may have a chance to bring people back, and are planning to lower them.

A few months ago, I wrote an article in this paper advising you against raising admission prices, because I felt that such an act would be an imposition on the public, but this time I advise you against lowering them, for the reason that they are low enough already, and by lowering them further you will not be able to clear any profit, even if your patronage might increase.

Some of you might have it in mind to raise them in the fall, but it is difficult to do so without creating ill-feeling among your patrons.

HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that you keep your prices at the present level.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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Vol. XX

SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1938

No. 20

## An Appraisal of the Ability of Unit Producers—No. 4

As said in the introductory remarks of every one of the articles, "Q" stands for "Quality," and "B," for "Box-Office Performance." Thus (Q-G::B-FG) means that the quality was good but that the box office performance was good-fair.

### Twentieth Century-Fox

RAYMOND GRIFFITH, 6: "Thin Ice" (Q-VG::B-E); "Wife, Doctor and Nurse" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "Heidi" (Q-VG::B-EG); "Second Honeymoon" (Q-FG::B-VG-G); "The Baroness and the Butler" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported); "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Girls' Dormitory" (Q-F::B-G); "One in a Million" (Q-VG::B-E); "Seventh Heaven" (Q-F::B-G); "Fifty Roads to Town" (Q-F::B-GF).

Very good showing.

KENNETH MACGOWAN, 2: "Love and Hisses" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "In Old Chicago" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "To Mary with Love" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "Lloyds of London" (Q-VG::B-VG); "Wake Up and Live" (Q-VG::B-E-VG); "This Is My Affair" (Q-FG::B-VG-G).

Very good showing.

DAVID HEMPSTEAD, 1: "Happy Landing" (Q-VG::B-VG).

Very good showing.

JOHN STONE, 6: "Wild and Woolly" (Q-VG::B-F); "Charlie Chan on Broadway" (Q-G::B-GF); "45 Fathoms" (Q-VG::B-VG-F); "Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo" (Q-F::B-GF); "Checkers" (Q-F::B-GF); "Mr. Moto's Gamble" (Q-G::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Charlie Chan at the Race Track" (Q-G::B-GF); "Pepper" (Q-F::B-G); "Under Your Spell" (Q-F::B-FP); "Charlie Chan at the Opera" (Q-G::B-G); "The Holy Terror" (Q-F::B-G); "Step Lively Jeeves" (Q-F::B-F); "Great Hospital Mystery" (Q-F::B-F); "Angel's Holiday" (Q-FP::B-GF); "Charlie Chan at the Olympics" (Q-G::B-GF).

Good average showing.

MAX GOLDEN, 3: "Hot Water" (Q-G::B-GP); "Borrowing Trouble" (Q-G::B-F); "Love on a Budget" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Back to Nature" (Q-FG::B-FP); "Laughing at Trouble" (Q-P::B-FP); "Off to the Races" (Q-F::B-GF); "Big Business" (Q-G::B-GF).

Good showing.

HAROLD WILSON, 2: "Life Begins in College" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "Danger, Love at Work" (Q-F::B-GF).

Good showing.

LAWRENCE SCHWAB, 2: "You Can't Have Everything" (Q-VG::B-E-VG); "Ali Baba Goes to Town" (Q-F::B-VG-F).

Good showing.

SAMUEL C. ENGLE, 1: "Lancer Spy" (Q-G::B-GP).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Crack Up" (Q-FG::B-F); "She Had to Eat" (Q-P::B-FP).

Good showing this season, fair last season.

SOL M. WERTZEL, 2: "One Mile from Heaven" (Q-F::

B-F); "Think Fast Mr. Moto" (Q-F::B-F); "Dangerously Yours" (Q-F::B-FP); "Thank You Mr. Moto" (Q-G::B-GF); "City Girl" (Q-FG::B-GF); "Change of Heart" (Q-F::B-F); "International Settlement" (Q-G::B-GF); "Walking Down Broadway" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported); "Island in the Sky" (Q-G::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Star for a Night" (Q-FG::B-F); "Ramona" (Q-VG::B-G); "Thank You Jeeves" (Q-F::B-F); "Fifteen Maiden Lane" (Q-FG::B-GF); "Can This Be Dixie?" (Q-FG::B-G); "Career Woman" (Q-G::B-F); "Woman Wise" (Q-F::B-F); "Fair Warning" (Q-F::B-FP); "That I May Live" (Q-F::B-FP).

Fairly good showing.

NUNNALLY JOHNSON, 1: "Love Under Fire" (Q-F::B-GF).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "The Road to Glory" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "Dimples" (Q-VG::B-VG); "Banjo on My Knee" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Nancy Steele Is Missing" (Q-F::B-GF); "Cafe Metropole" (Q-F::B-VG-G); "Slave Ship" (Q-FP::B-G).

Fair showing this season, much better last season.

ROBERT T. KANE, 1: "Dinner at the Ritz" (Q-G::B-F).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Wings of the Morning" (Q-F::B-GF); "Under the Red Robe" (Q-P::B-FP).

Good showing this season, fair to poor last season.

MILTON H. FELD, 1: "Big Town Girl" (Q-F::B-F).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Midnight Taxi" (Q-F::B-F); "Sing and Be Happy" (Q-FP::B-GF); "Born Reckless" (Q-FG::B-F); "Time Out for Romance" (Q-F::B-F).

Fair showing.

SOL LESSER, 1: "Tarzan's Revenge" (Q-P::B-P).

Poor showing for 20th Century-Fox, Fairly Good for RKO.

GENE MARKEY, 1: "Sally, Irene and Mary" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "White Hunter" (Q-P::B-F); "On the Avenue" (Q-E::B-E-VG); "Wee Willie Winkie" (Q-VG::B-E-VG).

Fair showing this season, far better last season. A good all around producer.

### United Artists

SAMUEL GOLDWYN, 5: "Stella Dallas" (Q-E::B-EG); "Dead End" (Q-VG::B-E-VG); "The Hurricane" (Q-VG::B-E-VG); "The Goldwyn Follies" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Adventures of Marco Polo" (Q-VG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Dodsworth" (Q-G::B-VG-G); "Come and Get It" (Q-E::B-G); "Beloved Enemy" (Q-VG::B-G); "Woman Chases Man" (Q-F::B-VG-P).

Very good to excellent showing.

DAVID O. SELZNICK, 3: "Prisoner of Zenda" (Q-VG::B-E-VG); "Nothing Sacred" (Q-G::B-E-VG); "Adventures of Tom Sawyer" (Q-G::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Garden of Allah" (Q-FG::B-G); "A Star Is Born" (Q-E::B-E).

Very good showing.

(Continued on last page)



### **"Doctor Rhythm" with Bing Crosby, Mary Carlisle and Beatrice Lillie**

(Paramount, May 6; time, 80 min.)

This comedy with music is light, cheerful entertainment. Lacking a substantial plot, however, it relies on Bing Crosby's singing, Beatrice Lillie's clowning, and some gags to put it over; but occasionally even the efforts of the stars cannot prevent it from becoming a little dull. Crosby sings the popular tunes in his customary expert manner, which should please his fans. There are several situations that provoke hearty laughter; the opening scenes, in the zoo, are particularly comical. For novelty, it is Beatrice Lillie who supplies it, with her inimitable style of clowning; but she will probably be appreciated more in large down-town theatres than in small towns, for her comedy is of the sophisticated type. The romance, which is carried through with a light touch, is pleasant:—

After an all-night spree in the park, participated in by Crosby, Andy Devine, Rufe Davis, and Sterling Holloway, four old schoolmates, Devine, who had been bitten by a seal, is unable to attend to his duties as a policeman. Crosby, a doctor, decides to help out his pal by taking his place, and reporting to Miss Lillie's home, to which Devine had been assigned. He finds that his duties are pleasant, since his job was to accompany Miss Lillie's niece (Mary Carlisle) wherever she went, so as to prevent her from eloping with Fred Keating, a magician, who was after her money. Crosby falls in love with Miss Carlisle and is doubly desirous of preventing her from marrying Keating. But she, in an effort to evade him and to be alone with Keating, leads him a merry chase. They all finally end up at a benefit show sponsored by Miss Lillie on behalf of the police force. There Keating gives himself away and Miss Carlisle finally sees him for what he was—a crook. She is happy that things turned out as they did, for she had fallen in love with Crosby.

The plot was adapted from the story "The Badge of Policeman O'Roon," by O. Henry. Jo Swerling and Richard Connell wrote the screen play, Frank Tuttle directed it, and Emanuel Cohen produced it. In the cast are Laura Hope Crews, John Hamilton, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Kentucky Moonshine" with the Ritz Brothers, Marjorie Weaver and Tony Martin**

(20th Century-Fox, May 13; time, 85 min.)

Good entertainment for theatres where the Ritz Brothers are popular; they dominate the picture with their antics. And for the most part they are good, particularly when they pose as hillbillies and become mixed up with the feuding mountain families. There are several extremely comical situations, which should cause even the most hardened spectators to laugh; one of the funniest scenes is that in which the Ritz Brothers do a burlesque of "Snow White." Aside from the material given to them, the story is routine. Tony Martin and Marjorie Weaver sing several numbers competently, and make a pleasant romantic team:—

Miss Weaver and the Ritz Brothers, who had been unsuccessful in their many attempts to get a radio audition, learn that Tony Martin, star on a well-known radio hour, was going to Kentucky to try to find some real hillbillies for his program, which had been falling down considerably, and they decide to get to Kentucky before him, disguise themselves as hillbillies, so as to attract his attention that way. They take with them Miss Weaver, who poses as their sister. The moment they arrive, the feuding starts, for their neighbors mistake them for members of a rival clan. But everything works out as they had planned; Martin hears them and arranges to take them all to New York. He falls in love with Miss Weaver. She is unhappy because of the fraud they were perpetrating. On the night of the broadcast, Martin discovers the hoax; but he does not care, for he was deeply in love with Miss Weaver. He finds out that she was leaving town, and rushes after her. The Ritz Brothers take his place on the program and are sensational. Everything is forgiven, they are signed up for the program, and Miss Weaver promises to marry Martin.

M. M. Musselman and Jack Lait, Jr., wrote the story, and Art Arthur and M. M. Musselman, the screen play; David Butler directed it, and Kenneth Macgowan produced it. In the cast are John Carradine, Wally Vernon, Berton Churchill, and others.

Class A.

### **"Sinners in Paradise" with John Boles and Madge Evans**

(Universal, May 6; time, 63 min.)

This is a well-produced action melodrama; but the plot is somewhat weak, and so it shapes up as just fair program entertainment. The story is not novel; it deals with a group of ill-assorted persons who, after an aeroplane wreck, find themselves on an island, where each one must fend for himself. But the trouble lies in the fact that not one of the characters awakens sympathy. For instance, no justification is given for the heroine's (Madge Evans') actions in deserting her husband; and so her romance with the hero is not appealing. The hero (John Boles), who had been living on the island, had run away from imprisonment on a murder charge; the motive for his having killed the man is somewhat hazy, and so one's emotions are not touched by his predicament. As for the other characters, they are unpleasant, to say the least: Bruce Cabot, a bank robber, had escaped with a loot of \$150,000; Marion Martin was supposedly a lady with a shady reputation; Charlotte Wynters, the richest girl in the world, had run away from her factory so as not to have to deal with her discontented workers; Gene Lockhart, a pompous Senator, could think only of himself; Milburn Stone and Morgan Conway, two ammunition salesmen, would not stop even at murder to get away from the island; two others, Donald Barry, the sole survivor of the crew, and Nana Bryant, who had been on her way to see her son, do nothing unpleasant, but they are negative characters.

In the development of the plot, Stone and Conway force Willie Fung, Boles' cook, to take them away in Boles' yacht. But he steers off the course, and in a fight with the men, throws them overboard. He then sails back to the island, where he dies from exhaustion. By that time, Miss Bryant had died from a gun wound received from Stone, when she had started to run towards the yacht as they had sailed away. The others, with the exception of Lockhart, had learned their lesson, and were ready to start life anew. Boles, who had fallen in love with Miss Evans, decides to go back and take his medicine, knowing that Miss Evans would wait for him until he had served his term.

Harold Buckley wrote the story, and he, Louis Stevens, and Lester Cole, the screen play; James Whale directed it, and Ken Goldsmith produced it.

Suitability, Class B.

### **"Extortion" with Scott Colton and Mary Russell**

(Columbia, April 25; time, 57 min.)

There's not much to recommend in this program murder mystery melodrama. For one thing, the story, as it develops, is unpleasant, particularly when the murderer's identity and the motive for his crime are divulged; as a matter of fact, it is demoralizing. Nor are the players strong enough to carry the weak story; besides, they are handicapped by poor material and extremely trite dialogue.

In the development of the plot, which unfolds at a college, the college proctor is murdered. Arthur Loft, the police inspector, finds reasons to suspect several persons, who had motives for killing the proctor. During the investigation, Thurston Hall, professor in a crime course, is severely beaten and fingerprint material stolen from his laboratory. Scott Colton, editor of the college paper, who had been suspected for a time because his fingerprints appeared on the gun, helps Loft solve the mystery. He proves that the murder had been committed by a student, who eventually confesses. The proctor, who had sold this student examination papers in advance, thereby enabling him to have an excellent scholastic rating, had been blackmailing this student. Having realized that the proctor would stop at nothing, the student had killed him. With the use of Thurston's fingerprinting material, he had put other fingerprints on the gun.

Earl Felton wrote the original screen play, Lambert Hillyer directed it, and Ralph Cohn produced it. In the cast are Gene Morgan, Frank C. Wilson, Ann Doran, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



### "Mystery House" with Dick Purcell and Ann Sheridan

(First National, May 21; time, 56 min.)

A typical program murder mystery melodrama, developed along familiar lines. Its appeal will be directed mainly to those who enjoy mystery plots, no matter how ordinary the production may be. It keeps one guessing to the end; three murders are committed, several persons are suspected, and eventually the murderer's identity is disclosed. The romance is of minor importance:—

Anne Nagel, whose father had died from a gun shot, refuses to believe that he had killed himself; she decides to call in a private detective (Dick Purcell) to investigate the case for her. She does this, despite the objections of her invalid aunt, who felt that nothing but trouble would come of it. At Purcell's request, Miss Nagel again invites the guests who had been present on the night of her father's death to spend a week-end with her. During the investigation two other murders are committed. Things look hopeless for a time, but Purcell begins piecing together bits of evidence and finally discovers the murderer's identity. By resorting to the same trick that the murderer had used to kill Miss Nagel's father, Purcell forces the man to confess. Miss Nagel is happy that her father's name was cleared. And Ann Sheridan, who had acted as nurse to the aunt, is proud of Purcell, with whom she was in love.

Mignon G. Eberhart wrote the story, and Sherman Lowe and Robertson White, the screen play; Noel Smith directed it, and Gordon Hollingshead produced it. In the cast are Sheila Bromley, Anthony Averill, William Hopper, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "Woman Against the World" with Ralph Forbes, Alice Moore and Edgar Edwards

(Columbia, March 17; time, 65½ min.)

A trite melodrama, poorly produced and lacking in box-office names. Although there is nothing to indicate where this picture was produced, it definitely does not look Hollywood-made, for two reasons: first, with the exception of Ralph Forbes, the players are completely unknown; secondly, the cheapness of the production and the fact that the players neither look nor talk like Americans stamps it as foreign-made. But aside from this, the story is wildly melodramatic, similar to the old 10-20-30 days. The only thing in its favor is the closing scene, where the heroine gives up her child to the couple the child had learned to love; this touches one's emotions:—

Despite her father's objections, Alice Moore marries Edgar Edwards, hired man on the farm. Forced to leave, Edwards goes to the city, promising to send for his wife. He obtains work as a watchman, and sends his wife money for fare; she arrives on the day that he is killed by holdup men. Realizing that she was going to have a baby, Miss Moore pleads with her cruel aunt, who lived in the city, to permit her to stay with her. After the baby is born, she looks for work. Returning home one night, she is shocked to find that her aunt had given the baby away. In an attempt to force her to talk, Miss Moore throws her to the floor; she strikes her head on the fireplace and dies. Miss Moore is arrested, and, since she refused to speak in her own defense, she is sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Her lawyer (Ralph Forbes), who had fallen in love with her, obtains her release on a parole. In order to earn enough money to pay a private detective to search for her child, she takes a job as entertainer in a clip joint. She eventually learns that the detective had double-crossed her; not only was he taking a weekly fee from her, but he was blackmailing the couple who had adopted the child, whom he had located. The matter comes to court when Miss Moore tries to take her child away. Realizing that the child loved the two she believed to be her parents, Miss Moore tearfully gives up her rights to her; she is consoled by Forbes.

Edgar Edwards wrote the screen play, and David Selman directed it; Lew Golder produced it. In the cast are Collette Lyons, Sylvia Welsh, Ethel Reese-Burns, and others.

Hardly suitable for children. Best for adults. Class B.

### "Vivacious Lady" with Ginger Rogers and James Stewart

(RKO [1936-37], May 13; time, 90 min.)

This romantic comedy is very good entertainment for the masses. What it lacks in substantial story values is made up for in gags, dialogue, and comical situations. It is chock-full of sex implications; but it is doubtful if any one will take offense at them, for they have all been handled with a manner free from coarseness. Ginger Rogers sings but one song; and she does not dance, except for one number in which she joins two others in doing the big apple. But that does not matter, for she can stand on her own in a straight part, handling romance and comedy expertly:—

Stewart, a young college professor, who had been sent to the city by his father (Charles Coburn), the college president, to find his cousin (James Ellison) and to bring him home, finally locates Ellison at a night club. But Ellison, who was drunk, refuses to leave because he wanted to see Miss Rogers, the singer, with whom he was infatuated. The moment Stewart sees her he falls in love with her; she, too, is attracted to him. They leave the club and spend the night walking and talking; on the spur of the moment they decide to get married. Stewart, Ellison, and Miss Rogers leave for home together. Stewart realizes that he must break the news to his parents gently. Many complications arise; his father thinks Miss Rogers is some kind of cheap person Ellison had brought home with him. The young couple are, therefore, kept apart. Eventually the news leaks out. Stewart's mother (Beulah Bondi) is happy, but Coburn is furious. Things become so complicated that Miss Rogers decides to leave; she is consoled on the train by Miss Bondi, who, too, had left her husband. Coburn eventually regrets his actions; he and Stewart race in their car to catch up with the train, and finally board it. The two couples are happily reconciled.

I. A. R. Wylie wrote the story, and P. J. Wolfson and Ernest Pagano, the screen play; George Stevens directed it, and was associate producer; Pandro S. Berman produced it. In the cast are Frances Mercer, Phyllis Kennedy, Franklin Pangborn, and others.

Children will not understand the sex implications; suitability, Class A.

### "Gun Law" with George O'Brien

(RKO, May 13; time, 60 min.)

An exciting western, despite a routine plot. Followers of this type of entertainment should get a "kick" out of it, for it has plentiful horseback riding, shooting, and fighting; and the pace is fast. It holds one in suspense, too, because of the constant danger to the hero. George O'Brien fits the hero's part very well, for not only does he act with naturalness, but he is well suited to parts of this type by reason of a powerful physique. The romance is of little consequence:

O'Brien, a United States Marshal, while travelling across the desert on his way to investigate lawlessness in a particular town, is held up by a notorious outlaw who had escaped from jail. The outlaw forces him to change clothes with him, after which he takes away his credentials and other belongings. But worst of all he takes his horse and water. O'Brien, after walking for some time, falls exhausted at a pool of water; he finds the outlaw there, dying from the effects of the water, which was bad. After the outlaw dies, O'Brien buries him. He decides to pose as the outlaw, so as to find out about the gang. His plan works, and he is taken in by the leader (Robert Gleckler). With the help of an assistant, who had been planted as a waiter at Gleckler's saloon, O'Brien finally gets all the evidence he needed. He proves that the Mayor, who had been posing as a law-abiding citizen, was really the brains behind the gangster activities. The crooks are cleaned out, and law and order established. With his work finished, O'Brien decides to settle down in the town, with the minister's daughter as his wife.

Oliver Drake wrote the story and screen play; David Howard directed it, and Bert Gilroy produced it. In the cast are Rita Oehmen, Ray Whitley, Paul Everton, and others.

Since the bravery of the hero is stressed, it is suitable for all. Suitability, Class A.



WALTER WANGER, 4: "Vogues of 1938" (Q-F::B-G); "Stand In" (Q-F::B-G); "52nd Street" (Q-P::B-P); "I Met My Love Again" (Q-F::B-GF).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "You Only Live Once" (Q-VG::B-VG-G); "History Is Made at Night" (Q-VG::B-VG-G).

Fair to poor showing this season, very good last season.

ERICH POMMER, 1: "Farewell Again" (now called "Troop Ship") (Q-F::B-F).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Fire over England" (Q-G::B-GF).

Fairly good showing.

VICTOR SAVILLE, 2: "Dark Journey" (Q-FG::B-FP); "Action for Slander" (Q-FP::B-F).

Fair showing.

ALEXANDER KORDA, 6: "Knight without Armor" (Q-FG-G::B-G-P); "Murder on Diamond Row" (Q-P::B-F); "Storm in a Teacup" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported); "Divorce of Lady X" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported); "The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported); "The Gaiety Girls" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Rembrandt" (Q-FG::B-FP); "Men Are Not Gods" (Q-F::B-GF); "Man Who Could Work Miracles" (Q-F::B-F); "Elephant Boy" (Q-VG::B-GF).

Fair showing.

### AL STEFFES ANSWERS SAM GOLDWYN'S INTERVIEW IN THE NEWSPAPERS

Every one of you knows, I am sure, that Sam Goldwyn, upon his return from Europe recently, gave an interview to the newspapers in which he derided the present low quality of the pictures, placing the blame on the high salaries of stars, directors, and writers.

"There are too many inferior people in the movie business," said Mr. Goldwyn, "and they are getting too much money. It used to be that the public was afraid to go to a movie for fear the B picture would be bad. Now it is both A and B pictures. . . .

"It is not the cost of the electricians' salaries and the other working people on the lot. It is the cost of the writer, actor, and the director.

"There are writers drawing big pay in Hollywood who ought to be back in New York writing letters. . . ."

He then went on to warn the American producers about the growing quality of foreign product.

That this interview has done much harm to the already harassed industry no one can deny; Mr. Goldwyn has practically told the public to keep away from picture theatres, for their chances of seeing a good picture are slim. He does not seem to care how much harm is done to the exhibitor so long as he can get some publicity.

The letter Mr. W. A. Steffes, president of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest (Minneapolis territory), has sent to Mr. Goldwyn commenting on his interview is worth reading:

"Dear Mr. Goldwyn:

"Under date of April 26th an article appeared in the Chicago Daily Tribune, copy of which is attached, crediting you with saying films are all bad (the writers too), denouncing the entire motion picture industry in this country.

"I have no way of knowing whether or not the story is authentic but if it is I can readily realize what is the matter with the motion picture business. I am not going to put the blame on the people whom you mention but directly on people who are sappy enough to issue such a statement. You are supposed to be the head of one of the great producing and distributing companies in this country—maybe the job has grown a little too big for you. In my opinion it has. If not why don't you get rid of some of the people you are complaining about in the newspaper article? If you are not big enough to run your own business, why don't you step aside and allow someone else to come in in your place?

"Perhaps if you and other producers of motion pictures would have confined themselves in the past to operating producing companies rather than trying to monopolize the industry by grabbing off all of the theatres and then insisting that their B product be played in their A theatres on preferred playing time at advanced admission prices and on

percentage terms that you know no theatre can afford to pay but merely kidding yourselves and the directors into believing that there is no limit so when one of the B pictures that cost a few hundred thousand dollars grossed a million for no reason whatsoever other than stated above, the director immediately pulls his hair and shouts: 'See, I am not spending enough. If I make a million dollar picture we can gross two.'

"If it was sympathy from the public that prompted the statements accredited to you I am afraid you are barking up the wrong tree as for years you and all other producers have been treating the American dollar as if it were a 1918 German mark. I don't know of any other business that has been so careless in their publicity about millions as the producers of motion pictures. Pick up any trade paper or in fact any statement accredited to any of the producers and what do you see?—The million dollar sign.

"You have been kidding only yourself and wrecking one of the most marvelous industries that ever existed. You have jacked film rentals up to where the theatre owners are almost panicky. They in turn have been compelled to raise admission prices to meet your exorbitant terms to the point where the public has stopped coming for the simple reason that whether you know it or not there is a serious recession on.

"You and other producers insisted that elaborate palaces be built in already over-seated situations as monuments to yourself and for no other reason whatsoever.

"The motion picture business was primarily the poor man's entertainment but producers like yourself and others have removed it from this class and through the conniving methods of the producing companies have now placed it in a strictly *class* entertainment field as only the well-to-do can afford to go to the movies and then not very often.

"Your problems are still not so great if you will just see the handwriting on the wall. Why don't you call a meeting of all of the producing heads and demand that they give up their theatres, put them in the hands of businessmen who will either make them pay a reasonable profit or disband them and not kid yourselves into believing that you can monopolize this great industry?

"I agree with you thoroughly when you say that the salaries of the actors, writers and directors are too high but you did not go far enough. The salaries of the producers, the presidents of some of these producing companies, chairman of the Board of Directors, etc., are also too high and I think that your company is one of the worst offenders in the industry when it comes to exorbitant salaries and bonuses for officers and a few other heads of your company.

"You were not satisfied with doing all of the above so you and a few other producers decided that you perhaps could ruin the motion picture business entirely if you would take all of your outstanding stars and give the public free entertainment, via the radio, on Thursday, Sunday and other nights of the week during the peak or what is supposed to have been the peak hours of show business. The theatre owners have even been able to withstand this obnoxious move by the producers, temporarily at least, and in my opinion it has only been through their ingenuity in conducting give-aways and chance games in their theatres.

"Now lo and behold the producers maintain that the chance games must go and have been conniving and scheming and doing everything humanly possible to outlaw chance games which has practically been accomplished and you haven't seen anything yet of bad business Mr. Goldwyn. Wait until these chance games are definitely out of existence. You won't only be compelled to run double features in the palaces that you and other producers acquired but you will find that triple features and even four of your so-called B, C, D and E pictures won't get them in.

"In spite of the fact that you say all films are bad your company, like all others, is demanding increased film rentals (and for what?).

"Perhaps you have an idea that the article which was accredited to you will stimulate the show business. If you have I am afraid you are going to have a sad awakening as most of the public already realize the pictures are bad so what is the sense of your coming out and telling the balance.

"In my opinion, there is nothing wrong with the show business save and except that it is headed by the wrong people. Now for the sake of perpetuating this great industry why don't you and some of the other illustrious dominating factors of the industry abdicate?"



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XX

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1938

No. 20

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## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y.)

8022 Making the Headlines—Holt-Roberts.....Mar. 10  
8040 Woman Against the World—Moore (67m.)..Mar. 17  
8018 The Lone Wolf in Paris—Lederer-Drake...Mar. 24  
8031 When G Men Step In—Don Terry.....Mar. 31  
8283 The Overland Express—Buck Jones (55m.)..Apr. 11  
8021 Flight Into Nowhere—Holt-Wells.....Apr. 18  
8006 There's Always a Woman—  
Blondell-Douglas .....Apr. 20  
8036 Extortion—Colton-Doran (58 m.).....Apr. 25  
8204 Call of the Rockies—Starrett (54 m.).....Apr. 30  
8037 The Main Event—Page-Wells .....May 5  
8205 Law of the Plains—Starrett (56 m.).....May 12  
City Shadows—Carrillo-Fellows .....June 8  
Holiday—Hepburn-Grant-Nolan .....June 15  
8211 Stagecoach Days—All star west. (58 m.)....June 20  
Highway Patrol—Wells-Page .....June 27

## First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

255 Gold Is Where You Find It—Brent-Rains....Feb. 19  
256 A Slight Case of Murder—Robinson-Bryan...Mar. 5  
252 Fools for Scandal—Lombard-Gravet.....Apr. 16  
261 Women Are Like That—Francis-O'Brien...Apr. 23  
267 Beloved Brat—Granville-D. Costello.....Apr. 30  
275 Torchy Blane in Panama—L. Lane-Kelly....May 7  
251 Adventures of Robin Hood—Flynn-Rains-  
Rathbone-deHavilland .....May 14  
277 Mystery House—Purcell-Sheridan-Nagel ...May 21  
259 Crime School—Bogart-Page .....May 28

## Gaumont-British Features

(1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

Non-Stop New York—Anna Lee-John Loder ....Nov. 17  
I Was a Spy—M. Carroll-H. Marshall (Reissue).Jan. 1  
Look Out for Love—Neagle-Carmanati .....Jan. 15  
Wife of General Ling—Jones-Inkijinnoff .....Feb. 1  
The Girl Was Young—Nova Pilbeam.....Feb. 15  
Sailing Along—Jessie Matthews (reset).....Apr. 15  
F. P. 1 Doesn't Answer (Floating City No. 1)  
(F.P. 1)—reissue (reset) .....May 1  
To the Victor—Fyffe-Loder-Lockwood (re) ....May 15  
The Show Goes On—Neagle-Carmanati (re).....May 15  
Three On a Weekend—Lockwood-Lodge.....June 1  
Crime Over London—M. Grahame-P. Cavanaugh..June 15

## Grand National Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

299 Spirit of Youth—Joe Louis .....Dec. 29  
217 He Loved an Actress—Ford-Lyon-Velez....Mar. 25  
218 Zamboanga—native cast .....Apr. 15  
219 International Crime—LaRocque-Allwyn ....Apr. 22

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

826 The First Hundred Years—Montgomery.....Mar. 11  
827 Girl of the Golden West—MacDonald-Eddy..Mar. 18  
828 Judge Hardy's Children—Stone-Parker.....Mar. 25  
No release set for .....Apr. 1  
No release set for .....Apr. 8  
No release set for .....Apr. 15  
831 Test Pilot—Gable-Loy-Tracy .....Apr. 22  
No release set for .....Apr. 29  
No release set for .....May 6  
833 Hold That Kiss—O'Sullivan-O'Keefe .....May 13  
830 Swiss Miss—Laurel-Hardy-Lind (reset)....May 20  
834 Yellow Jack—Montgomery-Bruce-Stone ....May 27  
832 Three Comrades—Taylor-Sullivan-Tone ....June 3  
The Toy Wife—Rainer-Douglas-Young .....June 10  
Lord Jeff—Bartholomew-Rooney .....June 17  
One Woman's Answer—Bruce-Marshall.....June 24  
835 Shopworn Angel—Sullivan-Stewart .....July 1  
(829 "Port of Seven Seas," listed in the last Index as an  
April 1 release, has been postponed)



## Monogram Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3708	County Fair—J. Farrell MacDonald	Nov. 24
3731	Romance of the Rockies—Keene (53m.)	Dec. 15
3743	Boy of the Streets—Jackie Cooper (re.)	Dec. 22
3722	Telephone Operator—Allen-White (61m.)	Jan. 5
3727	West of Rainbow's End—McCoy (57 m.)	Jan. 19
3724	Saleslady—Nagel-Heyburn	Feb. 2
3736	Where the West Begins—Randall (54 m.)	Feb. 2
3719	My Old Kentucky Home—Venable-Hall	Feb. 16
3733	The Painted Trail—Tom Keene (50 m.)	Feb. 23
3725	Port of Missing Girls—Allen-Carey	Mar. 2
3728	Code of the Rangers—Tim McCoy (56 m.)	Mar. 9
3715	Rose of the Rio Grande—Movita-Carroll	Mar. 16
3739	Land of Fighting Men—Randall (53m.) (r)	Apr. 11
3713	Female Fugitive—Venable-Reynolds (r)	Apr. 15
3729	Two Gun Justice (Renegade Law)— Tim McCoy (reset)	Apr. 30
3740	Gun Smoke Trail—Jack Randall	May 8
3709	Private Nurse—Blane-MacDonald-Hughes	May 22
3730	Phantom Ranger—Tim McCoy	May 29
3712	Marines Are Here—Travis-Oliver	June 8
3702	Romance of the Limberlost—Linden	June 22

## Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

3722	Daughter of Shanghai—Wong-Ahn (62m.)	Dec. 17
3723	True Confession—Lombard-MacMurray	Dec. 24
3724	Wells Fargo—McCrea-Dee-Burns	Dec. 31
3725	Bulldog Drummond's Revenge—Barrymore	Jan. 7
3726	Every Day's a Holiday—West-Lowe	Jan. 14
3727	Thrill of a Lifetime—Grable-Downs	Jan. 21
3755	Partners of the Plains—Wm. Boyd (70m.)	Jan. 28
3728	The Buccaneer—March-Tamiroff	Feb. 4
3729	Scandal Street—Ayres-Campbell	Feb. 11
3730	Big Broadcast of 1938—Fields-Raye	Feb. 18
3756	Cassidy of Bar 20—Boyd-Hayes (56½ m.)	Feb. 25
3731	Romance in the Dark—Swarthout-Boles	Mar. 4
3732	Dangerous to Know—Tamiroff-Patrick	Mar. 11
3733	Bulldog Drummond's Peril—Howard	Mar. 18
3734	Bluebeard's Eighth Wife—Colbert-Cooper	Mar. 25
3735	Tip-Off Girls—Nolan-Carlisle-Naish	Apr. 1
	No release set for	Apr. 8
3736	Her Jungle Love—Lamour-Milland	Apr. 15
3757	Heart of Arizona—Wm. Boyd (67½ m.)	Apr. 22
3737	College Swing—Burns-Allen-Raye-Hope	Apr. 29
3739	Doctor Rhythm—Crosby-Carlisle-Lillie	May 6
3738	Stolen Heaven—Raymond-Bradna (re)	May 13
	Cocoanut Grove—MacMurray-Hilliard	May 20
	Hunted Men—Nolan-Carlisle-Overman	May 27

("Professor Beware," listed in the last Index as a May 13 release, has been postponed)

## Republic Features

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

7125	Thunder in the Desert—Steele (55 min.)	Feb. 21
7115	Call of the Mesquiteers—Three Mes. (56m.)	Mar. 7
7008	Prison Nurse—Wilcoxon-Marsh (reset)	Mar. 29
7116	Outlaws of Sonora—Three Mes. (55 m.)	Apr. 11
7109	King of the Newsboys—Ayres-Mack (re)	Apr. 15
7126	The Feud Maker—Bob Steele (55 m.)	Apr. 18
7022	Arson Gang Busters—Livingston (re)	Apr. 25
7010	Invisible Enemy—Marshall-Correll (re)	May 2
7011	Call of the Yukon—Arlen-Roberts (re)	May 16
7012	Romance on the Run—Woods-Ellis	June 8
	Gangs of New York—Bickford-Dvorak	June 13
7127	Desert Patrol—Steele	June 27
7117	Riders of the Black Hill—Three Mesq.	July 6

## RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

### 1936-37 Season

739	Bringing Up Baby—Hepburn-Grant	Feb. 18
740	Vivacious Lady—Rogers-Stewart	May 13

(End of 1936-37 Season)

### 1937-38 Season

824	This Marriage Business—Moore-Lane	Apr. 8
826	Joy of Living—Dunne-Fairbanks	Apr. 15
825	Go Chase Yourself—Joe Penner	Apr. 22
827	Law of the Underworld—Morris-Shirley	May 6
881	Gunlaw—George O'Brien (60 min.)	May 13

## Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 West 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

831	Thank You, Mr. Moto—Lorre-Regan	Dec. 24
825	Love and Hisses—Winchell-Bernie-Simon	Dec. 31
833	City Girl—Brooks-Cortez-Wilcox	Jan. 7
823	Tarzan's Revenge—Morris-Holm	Jan. 7
829	Change of Heart (Headline Huntress)— Whalen-Stuart	Jan. 14
828	Hawaiian Buckaroo—Ballew-Knapp-Regas	Jan. 14
832	Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo—W. Oland	Jan. 21
830	Happy Landing—Henie-Ameche-Romero	Jan. 28
826	International Settlement—Del Rio-Sanders	Feb. 4
834	Checkers—Withers-Erwin-Merkel	Feb. 11
835	The Baroness and the Butler—W. Powell- Annabella	Feb. 18
873	County Chairman—Will Rogers reissue	Feb. 18
836	Love on a Budget—Prouty-Byington	Feb. 25
827	Sally, Irene and Mary—Faye-Martin	Mar. 4
838	Walking Down Broadway—Trevor-Brooks	Mar. 11
837	Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm—Temple	Mar. 18
841	Mr. Moto's Gamble—Lorre-Luke-Baldwin	Mar. 25
843	Island in the Sky—Stuart-Whalen (re)	Apr. 1
842	Rawhide—Ballew-Gehrig-Knapp	Apr. 8
840	In Old Chicago—Power-Faye-Ameche	Apr. 15
845	Battle of Broadway—McLaglen-Hovick	Apr. 22
848	Four Men and a Prayer—Young-Greene	Apr. 29
847	A Trip to Paris—Prouty-Deane	May 6
874	Life Begins at Forty—Rogers reissue	May 6
844	Kentucky Moonshine—Ritz Brothers (re)	May 13
849	Rascals—Withers-Hudson-Wilcox	May 20
846	Kidnapped—Baxter-Bartholomew-Whelan	May 27
839	Josette—Ameche-Simon-Young (reset)	June 3

## United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y.)

	Troopship (Farewell Again)—Banks-Robson	Oct. 8
	Stand-In—Howard-Blondell-Bogart	Oct. 29
	52nd Street—Baker-Paterson-Pitts-Carrillo	Nov. 19
	Nothing Sacred—Lombard-March-Connolly	Nov. 26
	Murder on Diamond Row—Lowe-Shaw	Dec. 10
	The Hurricane—Lamour-Hall-Astor	Dec. 24
	Action for Slander—Brook-Scott-Todd	Jan. 14
	I Met My Love Again—J. Bennett-Fonda	Jan. 28
	The Goldwyn Follies—Leeds-Menjou-Baker	Feb. 4
	Adventures of Tom Sawyer—Kelly-Robson	Feb. 11
	Storm in a Teacup—Leigh-Harrison	Feb. 25
	The Gaiety Girls—J. Hulbert-P. Ellis	Mar. 18
	Adventures of Marco Polo—Cooper (reset)	Apr. 15
	Divorce of Lady X—Oberon-Olivier	Apr. 15
	The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel—Stewart- Scott-Lister	Apr. 29
	Count of Monte Cristo—Reissue	May 13
	I Cover the Waterfront—Reissue	May 13

## Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y.)

A2029	State Police—William Hall	Mar. 18
A2041	Let's Make a Night of It—Rogers	Mar. 25
A2012	Goodbye Broadway—Brady-Wininger	Mar. 25
A2021	Reckless Living—Grey-Wilcox	Apr. 1
A2057	The Last Stand—Bob Baker (56 m.)	Apr. 1
A2022	Nurse From Brooklyn—Eilers-Kelly	Apr. 15
A2027	Lady in the Morgue—Foster-Ellis	Apr. 22
	Sinners in Paradise—Boles-Evans	May 6
	Air Devils—Wallace-Blake-Purcell	May 13
A3071	All Quiet on the Western Front—Reissue (87 min.)	May 15
A3072	Frankenstein—Reissue (71 min.)	May 15
A3073	Love Before Breakfast—Reissue (71 m.)	May 15
A3074	Lady Tubbs—Reissue (70 min.)	May 15
	The Devil's Party—McLaglen-Wilcox	May 20
	Rocket Ship—Crabbe-Rogers	June 3
	Suspicion—William-Patrick	June 10

## Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

225	Blondes at Work—Farrell-MacLane	Feb. 5
214	The Kid Comes Back—Morris-Travis	Feb. 12
226	Penrod and His Twin Brother—Mauch Twins	Feb. 26
216	Love, Honor and Behave—Morris-P. Lane	Mar. 12
221	He Couldn't Say No—McHugh-Wyman	Mar. 19
204	Jezebel—Davis-Fonda-Brent-Lindsay	Mar. 26
212	Over the Wall—Foran-Travis-Litel	Apr. 2
222	Accidents Will Happen—Reagan-G. Blondell	Apr. 9



## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

8856	Screen Snapshots No. 6—(9½m.)	Feb. 4
8655	Community Sing No. 5—(10m.)	Feb. 5
8702	Sad Little Guinea Pigs—K. Kat (6½m.)	Feb. 7
8505	The Horse on the Merry-Go-Round—Color Rhapsody (6½m.)	Feb. 17
8805	Feminine Fun—World of Sport (9½m.)	Feb. 18
8656	Community Sing No. 6—(10m.)	Feb. 25
8703	Auto Clinic—K. Kat (6½ min.)	Mar. 4
8857	Screen Snapshots No. 7—(9½ min.)	Mar. 4
8806	Unusual Hunting—World of Sport (9½m.)	Mar. 15
8657	Community Sing No. 7—(10 min.)	Mar. 18
8506	The Foolish Bunny—Color Rhapsody (8m.)	Mar. 26
8858	Screen Snapshots No. 8—(9½ m.)	Apr. 1
8704	Little Buckaroo—K. Kat (6½ m.)	Apr. 11
8507	Snowtime (The Big Birdcast)—Color Rhapsody (7½ min.)	Apr. 14
8807	Play Ball (Sport Stamina)—World of Sport (10 min.) (re)	Apr. 15
8757	Scrappy's Playmates—Scrappys (6 m.)	Apr. 27
8859	Screen Snapshots No. 9	Apr. 29
8553	Friendly Neighbors—Around the World In Color	Apr. 29
8658	Community Sing No. 8	May 6
8808	Sport Stamina—World of Sport (9½ m.)	May 10
8508	The Big Birdcast—Color Rhapsody	May 13
8705	Krazy Magic—Krazy Kat	May 20

### Columbia—Two Reels

8427	Fiddling Around—All Star com. (17½m.)	Jan. 21
8148	Battle in the Sky—Pilot No. 8 (23½m.)	Jan. 22
8149	The Great Flight—Pilot No. 9 (22m.)	Jan. 29
8428	A Doggone Mixup—All Star (18½m.)	Feb. 4
8150	Whirlpool of Death—Pilot No. 10 (23½m.)	Feb. 5
8151	The Haunted Mill—Pilot No. 11 (24½m.)	Feb. 12
8405	Wee Wee Monsieur—Stooges com. (17½m.)	Feb. 18
8152	The Lost Trail—Pilot No. 12 (23m.)	Feb. 19
8153	The Net Tightens—Pilot No. 13 (25½m.)	Feb. 26
8429	The Old Raid Mule—All Star com. (17½m.)	Mar. 4
8154	Vengeance Rides the Airways—Pilot No. 14 (21½ min.)	Mar. 5
8155	Retribution—Pilot No. 15 (22 m.)	Mar. 12
8161	The Isle of Fear—Secret of Treasure Island No. 1 (28½ min.)	Mar. 17
8430	Time Out For Trouble—All Star (16½ m.)	Mar. 18
8162	The Ghost Talks—Secret No. 2 (20½ m.)	Mar. 24
8431	Cuckoorancho—All Star com. (18 m.)	Mar. 25
8163	The Phantom Duel—Secret No. 3 (20½m.)	Mar. 31
8406	Tassles in the Air—Stooge (17 m.)	Apr. 1
8164	Four Buried Alive—Secret No. 4 (19 m.)	Apr. 7
8165	The Girl Who Vanished—Sec. No. 5 (19m.)	Apr. 14
8432	Jump Chump Jump—All star com. (19½m.)	Apr. 15
8166	Trapped by the Flood—Secret No. 6 (19m.)	Apr. 21
8167	The Cannon Roars—Secret No. 7	Apr. 28
8433	The Mind Needer—All star (18 m.)	Apr. 29
8168	The Circle of Death—Secret No. 8	May 2
8434	Aukles Away—All star com. (17½ m.)	May 13
8407	Healthy Wealthy and Dumb—Stooge (16½ min.)	May 20
8435	The Soul of a Heel—All star comedy	June 4

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

#### 1936-37 Season

W-540	Pipe Dream—Happy Harmony (8m.)	Feb. 5
W-541	Little Bantamweight—Happy Har. (8m.)	Feb. 12
(End of Season)		

#### 1937-38 Season

H-723	Captain Kidd's Treasure—Hist. My. (10m)	Jan. 22
S-704	Jungle Juveniles No. 2—(9m.)	Jan. 29
M-673	Stroke of Genius—Miniatures (11m.)	Feb. 5
C-734	Canned Fishing—Our Gang (11m.)	Feb. 12
S-705	Three on a Rope—Pete Smith (10m.)	Feb. 19
T-657	Glimpses of Austria—Traveltalks (9m.)	Feb. 19
H-724	The Ship That Died—Hist. Myst. (10m.)	Feb. 19
W-681	Cleaning House—Cartoon (8m.)	Feb. 19
M-674	Life in Sometown, U.S.A.—Minia. (11m.)	Feb. 26
C-735	Bear Facts—Our Gang (11m.)	Mar. 5
M-675	An Optical Poem—Minia. (Tech.)	Mar. 5
S-706	La Savate—Pete Smith (8m.)	Mar. 12
T-658	Glimpses of New Brunswick—Trav. (8m.)	Mar. 19
F-753	How To Figure Income Tax—Robert Benchley (8 min.)	Mar. 19

H-725	The Face Behind the Mask—Historical Mysteries (11 min.)	Mar. 19
C-736	Three Men in a Tub—Our Gang (10 m.)	Mar. 26
W-682	Blue Monday—Cartoon (9 min.)	Apr. 2
S-707	Penny's Party—Pete Smith (Tech.) (9m)	Apr. 9
C-737	Came the Brawn—Our Gang (11 min.)	Apr. 16
T-659	Beautiful Budapest—Traveltalks (9 m.)	Apr. 16
W-683	Poultry Pirates—Capt. Kid Cart. (9m)	Apr. 16
F-754	Music Made Simple—Benchley (8 m.)	Apr. 16
W-684	The Captain's Pup—Captain cartoon	Apr. 30
M-676	That Mothers Might Live—Miniatures	Apr. 30
S-708	Modeling For Money—Specialties (10 m.)	Apr. 30
C-738	Feed 'Em and Weep—Our Gang	May 7
M-677	The Forgotten Step—Miniatures	May 7
T-660	Rural Sweden—Traveltalks (8 min.)	May 14
S-709	Surf Heroes—Specialties	May 28

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

P-611	What Price Safety—Crime Doesn't Pay (21 min.)	Feb. 5
P-612	Miracle Money—Crime Doesn't Pay (21 min.)	Mar. 26
R-603	Billy Rose's Casa Manana Revue—Musical (21 min.)	Mar. 26

### Paramount—One Reel

L7-4	Unusual Occupations No. 4—(10m.)	Feb. 11
A7-9	Listen to Lucas—Headliner (9½m.)	Feb. 18
E7-7	Learn Polikeness—Popeye (7m.)	Feb. 18
V7-8	Gold!—Paragraphics (9m.)	Feb. 25
R7-8	A Fascinating Adventure—Sport. (9½m.)	Feb. 25
T7-7	Be Up to Date—Betty Boop (6m.)	Feb. 25
C7-4	The Tears of an Onion—Color Clas. (7m.)	Feb. 25
P7-8	Paramount Pictorial No. 8—(9m.)	Mar. 4
A7-10	The Star Reporter No. 3—Head. (9½m.)	Mar. 11
E7-8	The House Builder—Upper—Popeye (6m.)	Mar. 18
J7-4	Popular Science No. 4—(10½m.)	Mar. 18
V7-9	Jungle Glimpses—Paragraphics (9 m.)	Mar. 25
R7-9	Cops and Robbers—Sportlight (9½ m.)	Mar. 25
T7-8	Honest Love and True—Betty Boop (8m.)	Mar. 25
SC7-4	Thanks for the Memory—Sc. Song (7 m.)	Mar. 25
P7-9	Paramount Pictorial No. 9—(9½ m.)	Apr. 1
A7-11	Hall's Holiday—Headliner (9½ m.)	Apr. 8
E7-9	Big Chief Ugh-Amugh-Ugh—Popeye (7m.)	Apr. 15
L7-5	Unusual Occupations No. 5—(10 min.)	Apr. 15
V7-10	The Bike Parade—Paragraphic (9½ m.)	Apr. 22
R7-10	Win, Place or Show—Sportlight (9½m.)	Apr. 22
T7-9	Out of the Inkwell—Betty Boop (5½ m.)	Apr. 22
C7-5	Hold It—Color Classic (7 min.)	Apr. 29
A7-12	Bob Crosby and His Orchestra—Headliner (10 min.)	May 6
P7-10	Paramount Pictorial No. 10—(9 m.)	May 6
J7-5	Popular Science No. 5	May 13
V7-11	Crime Fighters—Paragraphic	May 20
R7-11	Red, White and Blue Champions—Sportlight (9½ min.)	May 20
E7-10	I Yam Love Sick—Popeye	May 20
T710	Swing School—Betty Boop	May 27
SC7-5	You Leave Me Breathless—Screen Song	May 27

### RKO—One Reel

84202	Phoney Boy—Nu Atlas Musical (11m.)	Oct. 15
84602	Pathe Parade—(11m.)	Nov. 5
84103	The Old Mill—Disney cart. (9m.)	Nov. 5
84402	Murder in Swing Time—Condor (10m.)	Nov. 19
84403	Prairie Swingaroo—Musical (10m.)	Nov. 19
84203	Sweet Shoe—Nu Atlas Musical (11m.)	Nov. 26
84104	Pluto's Quinuplets—Disney (8½m.)	Nov. 26
84204	Deviled Ham—Nu Atlas (10m.)	Dec. 3
84105	Donald's Ostrich—Disney cart. (9m.)	Dec. 10
84106	Lonesome Ghosts—Disney cart. (9m.)	Dec. 24
84603	Pathe Parade—(10m.)	Jan. 14
84205	A Radio Hook-Up—Nu Atlas (10m.)	Jan. 28
84301	White Magic—Sportsopes (10m.)	Jan. 28
84107	Self Control—Disney cart. (9m.)	Feb. 11
84206	Latin Rhythm—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Feb. 18
84302	In the Swim—Sportsopes (10m.)	Feb. 18
84108	Boat Builders—Disney cart. (7m.)	Feb. 25
84604	Pathe Parade—(10m.)	Feb. 25
84109	Donald's Better Self—Disney (8m.)	Mar. 11
84207	No Sale—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Mar. 11
84303	Windward Way—Sportsopes (10m.)	Mar. 11
84110	Moth and the Flame—Disney (8m.)	Apr. 1
84208	Skyline Revue—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Apr. 1



84304 Swinging Mallets—Sportscopes (10m.) ....Apr. 1  
84111 Donald's Nephews—Disney (8m.) .....Apr. 15  
84209 Maids and Music—Nu Atlas (10 m.).....Apr. 22  
84605 Pathe Parade—(11 min.) .....Apr. 22  
84305 Pinchurst—Sportscopes (9 min.) .....Apr. 22  
84112 Mickey's Trailer—Disney cart. (8 m.) ....May 6  
84210 Salt Shakers—Nu Atlas (11 min.).....May 13  
84306 Bit and Bridle—Sportscopes (10 m.).....May 13  
84113 Wynken, Blynken & Nod—Disney (8 m.)...May 27

### RKO—Two Reels

83107 March of Time—(19m.) .....Feb. 18  
83801 Quintupland—Special (19m.) .....Feb. 18  
83202 The Stupor-Visor—Radio Flash. (17m.) ..Feb. 25  
83704 His Pest Friend—Leon Errol (18m.) ....Mar. 11  
83108 March of Time—(19m.) .....Mar. 18  
83404 False Roomers—Edgar Kennedy (17m.) ..Mar. 25  
83502 Twenty Girls and a Band—Stuart (18m.)...Apr. 8  
83109 March of Time—(21 min.) .....Apr. 15  
83302 A Buckaroo Broadcast—Whitney (18 m.)...Apr. 22  
83705 Berth Quakes—Leon Errol (16 m.).....May 6  
83110 March of Time .....May 13  
83405 Kennedy's Castle—E. Kennedy (17 m.)....May 28  
83603 Not Yet Titled—Headliner .....June 3  
83111 March of Time .....June 10  
83203 The Photografter—Radio Play (15 m.)....June 17

### Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

8513 His Off Day—Terry-Toon (6½m.) .....Feb. 4  
8606 Songbirds of the North Woods—T. Chest  
(10 min.) .....Feb. 11  
8514 Just Ask Jupiter—Terry-Toon (6½m.)....Feb. 18  
8910 All's Fair—Song Hit (10m.) .....Feb. 25  
8607 Sky Fishing—Treasure Chest (9½m.) ....Feb. 25  
8515 Gandy the Goose—Terry-Toon (6½m.) ....Mar. 4  
8516 Happy and Lucky—Terry-Toon (6½m.) ...Mar. 18  
8610 Music from the Stars—Treas. Chest (11m.)...Mar. 25  
8517 A Mountain Romance—T. Toon (6½m.)....Apr. 1  
8608 Return of the Buffalo—Treas. Chest (10m.)...Apr. 8  
8518 Robinson Crusoe's Broadcast—T. Toon  
(6½ min.) .....Apr. 15  
8604 Kingdom for a Horse—Treas. Chest (10m.)...Apr. 22  
8519 Maid in China—Terry-Toon (7 min.).....Apr. 29

### Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

8303 Uncle Sol Solves It—Mirthquake (15½m.)..Feb. 11  
8116 Wanna Be a Model?—Machamer (16½m.)..Feb. 25  
8308 Love and Onions—Timberg-Rooney (19½m) Mar. 11  
8117 Beautiful But Dummies—West-Patricola  
(17½ min.) .....Mar. 25  
8309 Sing For Sweetie—Lee Sullivan (19 m.)....Apr. 15  
8118 Cute Crime—Jefferson Machamer (19 m.)...Apr. 29

### Universal—One Reel

A2390 Stranger Than Fiction No. 46—(9m.).....Feb. 21  
A2279 Yokel Boy Makes Good—Oswald (7m.) ...Feb. 21  
A2377 Going Places with Thomas No. 46—(9m.)..Feb. 28  
A2280 Trade Mice—Oswald (7m.) .....Feb. 28  
A2391 Stranger Than Fiction No. 47—(9m.) ....Mar. 14  
A2281 Feed the Kitty—Oswald cart. (7m.) .....Mar. 14  
A2378 Going Places with Tho's No. 47—(9½m.)..Mar. 21  
A2392 Stranger Than Fiction No. 48—(8½m.)...Apr. 4  
A2379 Going Places with Thomas No. 48—(9m.)..Apr. 11  
A2282 Nellie, The Sewing Machine Girl—Oswald  
(7½ min.) .....Apr. 11  
A2393 Stranger Than Fiction No. 49—(8½ m.)...Apr. 18  
A2380 Going Places with Thomas No. 49—(9m.)...Apr. 25  
A2283 Tail End—Oswald cartoon (7 m.) .....Apr. 25  
A2394 Stranger Than Fiction No. 50—(9 m.)....May 2  
A2381 Going Places With Thomas No. 50—(9m.)...May 9  
A2284 The Problem Child—Oswald cart. (7m.)...May 16  
A2395 Stranger Than Fiction No. 51—(9 m.)....June 6

### Universal—Two Reels

A2167 Down on the Barn—Mentone (17m.).....Feb. 23  
A2160 Breathless Moments—Special (19m.) ....Feb. 28  
A2890 A Race for Fortune—Tyler No. 10 (21m.)..Feb. 28  
A2891 No Man's Land—Tyler No. 11 (20m.) ....Mar. 7  
A2892 The Kimberly Diamonds—Tyler No. 12  
(21 min.) .....Mar. 15

A2581 New Worlds to Conquer—Flash Gordon's  
Trip to Mars No. 1 (20 min.) .....Mar. 22  
A2168 Somewhere in Paris—Mentone (17m.) ...Mar. 23  
A2582 The Living Dead—Flash No. 2 (20m.)....Mar. 29  
A2583 Queen of Magic—Flash No. 3 (21½m.) ...Apr. 5  
A2584 Ancient Enemies—Flash No. 4 (19m.) ....Apr. 12  
A2585 The Boomerang—Flash No. 5 (19½m.)...Apr. 19  
A2586 Tree-Men of Mars—Flash No. 6 (20 m.)...Apr. 26  
A2169 Latin Hi-Hattin'—Mentone (17½ m.)....Apr. 27  
A2587 Prison of Mongo—Flash No. 7 (21 m.)....May 3  
A2588 The Black Sapphire of Kalu—Flash No. 8  
(19 min.) .....May 10  
A2589 Symbol of Death—Flash No. 9 (20 min.)...May 17  
A2170 High Jack N The Show—Mentone (17m.)..May 18  
A2590 Incense of Forgetfulness—Flash No. 10  
(19 min.) .....May 24  
A2591 Human Bait—Flash No. 11 (20 min.) ....May 31  
A2592 Ming the Merciless—Flash No. 12 (20m)...June 7

### Vitaphone—One Reel

3504 Land of the Kangaroo—Color-Tour (10½m.) Dec. 18  
3304 Alibi Mark—True Adventures (13 m.) .....Dec. 25  
3706 Henry King and Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.)..Dec. 25  
3205 Two Boobs in a Balloon—Bergen re. (10m.)..Jan. 1  
3406 Daffy Duck and Egghead—Mer. Mel. (7½.)..Jan. 1  
3505 India's Millions—Color-Tour (10m.) .....Jan. 8  
3805 Ice Cream-Jockeys—Negligees—Pic. (10m.)..Jan. 8  
3905 Unreel Newsreel—Varieties (9m.) .....Jan. 8  
3206 Free and Easy—Bergen reissue (10m.) ....Jan. 15  
3709 Leon Navarro & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.)...Jan. 15  
3605 Porky's Poppa—Looney Tunes (7m.) .....Jan. 15  
3908 Ski Flight—Varieties (10m.) .....Jan. 22  
3305 The Bolted Door—True Adv. (13m.) .....Jan. 22  
3407 My Little Buckaroo—Mer. Mel. (7½m.) ....Jan. 29  
3708 Enrie Madriguera & Orch.—Mel. M. (10m.)..Jan. 29  
3507 Malayan Jungles—Color-Tour (10m.) .....Feb. 5  
3606 Porky at the Crocadero—L. Tunes (7½m.)..Feb. 5  
3806 Kellogg Ranch-Hockey-Shoes—Pict. (10m.)..Feb. 5  
3710 Carl Hoff & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10m.) ....Feb. 12  
3906 Alibi Time—Varieties (11m.) .....Feb. 12  
3306 Hit and Run—True Adventures (13m.) ....Feb. 19  
3408 Jungle Jitters—Mer. Melodies (7m.) .....Feb. 19  
3607 What Price Porky—L. Tunes (7½m.) .....Feb. 26  
3807 Dogs-Billiards-Lithography—Pict. (10m.) ...Mar. 5  
3707 Benny Meroff & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.) ...Mar. 5  
3409 Sneezing Weasel—Mer. Melodies (7m.) ....Mar. 12  
3502 What the World Makes—Color-Tour (10m) Mar. 12  
3907 Vitaphone Gambols—Varieties (10½m.) ...Mar. 19  
3307 Shopgirl's Evidence—True Adv. (12½m.)...Mar. 19  
3608 Porky's Phoney Express—L. Tunes (7m.)..Mar. 19  
3711 Mike Riley & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10m.) ...Mar. 26  
3808 Song Writers-Bowling-Rubber—Pict. (10m) Apr. 2  
3508 Crossroads of the Orient—Color-T. (10m.)..Apr. 2  
3410 A Star Is Hatched—Mer. Mel. (8m.) .....Apr. 2  
3909 The Crawfords—Varieties (9½m.) .....Apr. 9  
3609 Porky's Five and Ten—L. Tunes (7m.) ....Apr. 16  
3712 Rubinoff & His Violin—Mel. Mast. (10m.)...Apr. 16  
3308 Dear Old Dad—True Adventures (12m.)...Apr. 16  
3411 Penguin Parade—Merrie Melodies (7½m.)...Apr. 23  
3510 Toradja Land—Color-Tour (10 min.).....Apr. 30  
3809 Silverware—Ice Btg.—Trains—Pictorial  
Revues (9 min.) .....Apr. 30  
3713 Carl "Deacon" Moore & Orch.—Mel. Master  
(10 min.) .....May 7  
3910 The Juggling Fool—Varieties (11 m.).....May 14  
3309 Wanderlust—True Adventures (13 m.)....May 14  
3509 Pearl of the East—Color-Tour (10 m.)....May 21  
3714 Freddie Rich & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m)...May 28

### Vitaphone—Two Reels

3014 Here's Your Hat—Revues (21m.) .....Dec. 11  
3026 One on the House—Gay-Eties (20m.) .....Dec. 18  
3021 Wedding Yells—Murray-Oswald (21m.) ...Jan. 1  
3009 Script Girl—Headliners (21m.) .....Jan. 15  
3003 Romance Road—Tech. Prod. (19m.) .....Jan. 29  
3015 The Candid Kid—Revues (20m.) .....Feb. 12  
3027 Waiting Around—Gay-Eties (21m.) .....Feb. 26  
3010 Little Me—Wini Shaw (22m.) .....Mar. 5  
3005 Romance of Louisiana—Tech. (18m.) .....Mar. 12  
3022 Under the Wire—Comedy (20m.) .....Mar. 26  
3016 Got a Match—Revues (19 m.) .....Apr. 9  
3028 Hold That Ball—Gay-Eties (19 min.).....Apr. 23  
3011 Forget Me Knots—Claire (Tech.) (21 m.)...May 7  
3023 Stocks & Blondes—Comedy (18 min.).....May 21  
3004 Out Where the Stars Begin—Tech. (19 m.)...May 28

## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES Universal

668 Saturday ....May 21  
669 Wednesday ..May 25  
670 Saturday ....May 28  
671 Wednesday ..June 1  
672 Saturday ....June 4  
673 Wednesday ..June 8  
674 Saturday ....June 11  
675 Wednesday ..June 15  
676 Saturday ....June 18  
677 Wednesday ..June 22  
678 Saturday ....June 25  
679 Wednesday ..June 29  
680 Saturday ....July 2  
681 Wednesday ..July 6

## Fox Movietone

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74 Saturday ....May 28  
75 Wednesday ..June 1  
76 Saturday ....June 4  
77 Wednesday ..June 8  
78 Saturday ....June 11  
79 Wednesday ..June 15  
80 Saturday ....June 18  
81 Wednesday ..June 22  
82 Saturday ....June 25  
83 Wednesday ..June 29  
84 Saturday ....July 2  
85 Wednesday ..July 6

## Paramount News

83 Saturday ....May 21  
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86 Wednesday ..June 1  
87 Saturday ....June 4  
88 Wednesday ..June 8  
89 Saturday ....June 11  
90 Wednesday ..June 15  
91 Saturday ....June 18  
92 Wednesday ..June 22  
93 Saturday ....June 25  
94 Wednesday ..June 29  
95 Saturday ....July 2  
96 Wednesday ..July 6

## Metrotone News

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272 Saturday ....May 28  
273 Wednesday ..June 1  
274 Saturday ....June 4  
275 Wednesday ..June 8  
276 Saturday ....June 11  
277 Wednesday ..June 15  
278 Saturday ....June 18  
279 Wednesday ..June 22  
280 Saturday ....June 25  
281 Wednesday ..June 29  
282 Saturday ....July 2  
283 Wednesday ..July 6

## Pathe News

85185 Sat. (O.) .May 14  
85286 Wed. (E.) May 18  
85187 Sat. (O.) .May 21  
85288 Wed. (E.) May 25  
85189 Sat. (O.) .May 28  
85290 Wed. (E.) June 1  
85191 Sat. (O.) .June 4  
85292 Wed. (E.) June 8  
85193 Sat. (O.) .June 11  
85294 Wed. (E.) June 15  
85195 Sat. (O.) .June 18  
85296 Wed. (E.) June 22  
85197 Sat. (O.) .June 25  
85298 Wed. (E.) June 29  
85199 Sat. (O.) .July 2  
852100 Wed. (E.) July 6



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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1938

No. 21

### SELZNICK PICTURES NOT TIED UP WITH OTHER UNITED ARTISTS PICTURES

In the issue of January 16, 1937, I made the statement that, if an exhibitor wants to buy the Selznick pictures and no other United Artists pictures, he may do so.

Recently some exhibitors informed me that they have tried to get them but that they could not do so unless they bought other United Artists pictures along with them, and I was asked to give them the source of my information for that statement.

When I was in Hollywood in August, 1936, I called on David Selznick at the Pathe-Culver City studios, where he has been producing his pictures. In the course of our conversation, Mr. Selznick told me that the sales policy of Selznick International was to sell its pictures to the exhibitors individually; that is, if an exhibitor wanted to buy from United Artists Selznick pictures and no others, he could do so, provided he met the prices and the sales terms set on them for his theatre.

When I received the exhibitor inquiries, I communicated with the Selznick organization, and again I have been assured that what Mr. Selznick told me in August, 1936, is as true now as it was then.

There is no question in my mind that the United Artists salesmen have instructions to sell the Selznick pictures individually, if an exhibitor so wants them. If there have been cases where they have refused so to sell them, this may be owed to the over-zealousness of such salesmen who, in order to make additional sales and thus show a good record with the Home Office, have not hesitated to violate their instructions.

I might add that, what is true of purchasing Selznick pictures, is true of play-dating them and of receiving them on the days booked for exhibition. In other words, if you have any contractual controversy with United Artists about a picture of any other producer, the United Artists exchange has no right to withhold from you a Selznick picture about which no controversy exists.

If you are one of those who wants to buy the Selznick pictures alone but you have been told that you cannot buy them unless you buy other pictures along with them, I suggest that you communicate at once with the United Artists Home Office, at 729 Seventh Avenue, New York City. In case you can not get satisfaction out of it, then you should communicate with Mr. L. V. Calvert, New York representative of Selznick International Pictures, Inc., at 230 Park Avenue, New York, informing him of the facts. I am positive that immediate attention will be paid to your complaint.

### THE VALUE OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVERTISING

Under the heading, "It's Lucky for America that this man didn't take 'NO' for an answer," the insurance companies, through their National Committee for Life Insurance Education, have taken advertisements in prominent newspapers throughout the country, with the object of bringing about a better understanding among the general public of "the institution of life insurance."

The advertisements do not undertake to advertise any particular company, but merely the insurance business.

What has prompted such an action on the part of the life insurance companies is, no doubt, the scandals that recently involved industrial insurance: feeling that these scandals either have affected or would eventually affect all forms of insurance, conducted even by companies that were not implicated in those scandals, they have decided to resort to institutional advertising in order that they might gain the public's good will.

It is, indeed, a praiseworthy act—that of attempting to gain the good will of the public.

In the motion picture business there has been much adverse publicity of many forms, the kind that could not help affecting the theatres' box office receipts. But no industry leader has yet thought of suggesting institutional advertising so as to offset its harmful effects.

Lately two incidents have occurred to require the attention of the industry's leaders as to the need of institutional advertising: the one has been Samuel Goldwyn's interview; the other, Harry Brandt's campaign against the "box-office poison" stars.

As to the former, this paper's views were expressed in last week's issue, in which Mr. W. A. Steffes' letter was reproduced with appropriate comments; as to the latter, Harrison's Reports wishes to say that, without minimizing the fact that some benefit has accrued to the industry from this "explosion," coming as it came immediately after the Goldwyn interview, it could not help doing irreparable harm, for the public was made self-conscious of the fact that the majority of the so-called big pictures have been box-office failures. And the greatest harm has been done to the small exhibitors, who have under contract many pictures with the stars that were criticized: you may imagine what will be the effect at the box office on the days they play the pictures of these stars!

It is true that, had these criticisms been made within the industry, no attention would have been paid to them, for the industry leaders have the habit of plugging their ears to constructive criticism; it had to be made in the daily press to gain any attention.

The industry leaders should think seriously of employing institutional advertising to offset the harmful effects against the motion picture industry from these and other cases of adverse publicity. They should emulate the example of the insurance companies, laying their personal interests aside: when pictures are publicized; when the public is told the benefits that are accrued from going to pictures, no matter what company's pictures are played, good is done to everybody engaged in one branch or other of the industry: no manufacturer has ever been harmed when the wares of all manufacturers are boosted collectively.

When the producers decide to resort to this sort of advertising, they should select the medium that would bring them the most benefit for each dollar expended. And has there been a better medium than the newspapers? The newspaper people have always been ready and willing to fight the industry's battles. And they give to it annually millions of dollars worth of free publicity. If other mediums should be employed, no one will regret it; but the medium that should be employed mainly should be the daily newspapers.

Let us make a start now, for it is now that this sort of advertising is needed—to offset, more than anything else, Samuel Goldwyn's unwise interview.



### "Romance on the Run" with Donald Woods and Patricia Ellis

(Republic, June 8; time, 67½ min.)

Fair entertainment. The story offers nothing new and is, for the most part, highly far-fetched; but since the action is fast it holds one's interest to the end. Although it is primarily a crook melodrama, it never takes itself too seriously; as a matter of fact, the comedy angle is its best feature. Edward Brophy, as butler and assistant sleuth to Donald Woods, a private detective, provokes most of the laughter by his wisecracks. The romance is pleasant:—

When a valuable diamond necklace is stolen, Andrew Tombes, whose insurance company was liable for the loss, calls in Woods, a private detective, to handle the case. William Demarest, police department inspector, resents this, as does Patricia Ellis, Tombes' secretary, who felt that Woods was a crook himself. Woods suspects Craig Reynolds and Grace Bradley; he goes to Reynolds' apartment and, after a search, discovers what he believed to be the necklace. After paying Woods \$10,000 for having recovered the necklace, Tombes discovers that he had brought back a paste imitation. Woods is shocked when he hears the news. In company with Brophy he starts to trail the crooks. He is followed by Demarest, who was determined to arrest him, and by Miss Ellis, who mistrusted him. She leads Woods into believing that she was a newspaper reporter, and pesters him with questions. He and Brophy try to lose her, but to no avail. They finally meet the crooks, and after a hectic battle rush off in their car, in which Miss Bradley had left her bag, which contained the necklace. Miss Ellis accidentally finds the necklace, which had been hidden in a jar of cold cream. Pursued by Woods, Brophy and Demarest, she rushes back to the city. They all wind up at the insurance office, where Miss Ellis turns the necklace over to Woods, in order to give him the credit. Woods proposes marriage to her, and she accepts.

Eric Taylor wrote the story, and Jack Townley, the screen play; Gus Meins directed it, and Herman Schlom produced it. In the cast are Bert Roach, Leon Weaver, Edwin Maxwell, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "One Wild Night" with June Lang and Dick Baldwin

(20th Century-Fox, June 10; time, 71 min.)

"Wild" is the word for this melodrama. But it is good program entertainment, for the action is fast and occasionally very comical. In spite of the fact that it is far-fetched, it holds one in suspense, because of the melodramatic-mystery twist, which is not cleared up until the end. Many of the laughs are provoked by the agony suffered by William Demarest, city editor, as the result of the erroneous stories sent in by adventure-seeking June Lang, a reporter. At one time fourteen libel suits are started against the newspaper on one story she had sent in. The romantic interest is kept in the background:—

Andrew Tombes, chief of police, is incensed because of his inability to get clues on abduction cases involving three prominent citizens in his town, who had disappeared with large sums of money after abduction threats. Dick Baldwin, Tombes' son, who had just completed three months of criminology work in school, returns home to give his father scientific aid, much to his father's disgust. Baldwin is hounded by Miss Lang, a newspaper reporter, who gets him into trouble by sending to her paper highly exaggerated stories. Her editor discharges her at least twice a day for her incompetence. But finally they get a clue, and trail J. Edward Bromberg, the town banker, to a deserted farm house. There they find the three missing men, who confess that the abduction idea was a scheme to get away from their wives in order to take a trip to the South Sea Islands. But at the same time they discover that Bromberg, who had been in league with them and who was supposed to turn over \$50,000 to each one from their individual accounts, had planned to take the money himself instead, so as to cover up losses he had suffered in gambling. With the case finished, Baldwin turns his attention to Miss Lang.

The plot was adapted from a story idea by Edwin D. Torgerson; Charles Belden and Jerry Cady wrote the screen play, Eugene Forde directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are Lyle Talbot, Romaine Callender, Spencer Charters, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Hold That Kiss" with Maureen O'Sullivan, Dennis O'Keefe and Mickey Rooney

(MGM, May 13; time, 79 min.)

Here is delightful program entertainment. The story is routine; but the performances are very good, and the production far superior to that usually given program pictures. There is hardly a dull moment; the action is fast, and the situations and dialogue laugh-provoking. Mickey Rooney steals nearly every scene in which he appears. This time he is the heroine's annoying younger brother, who imagines himself to be a first rate clarinet player, annoying every one with his practicing. Needless to say each time he appears there is something to laugh about. The romance is charming:—

Dennis O'Keefe, clerk at a travel agency, and Maureen O'Sullivan, a model at an exclusive gown shop, meet at the home of millionaire George Barbier, who was giving a wedding reception for his daughter. O'Keefe had gone there to deliver the steamship tickets for the bride and Miss O'Sullivan to check over the bride's trousseau. Each one had thought that the other was a guest and, therefore, wealthy and in society. When Miss O'Sullivan tells her family about O'Keefe, who had given her his telephone number, they, too, think he was wealthy; and so they urge her to go out with him. As a matter of fact, Mickey, pretending to be the butler, calls up O'Keefe, thereby compelling Miss O'Sullivan to talk to him. They meet and both carry on the pretense of being wealthy. Miss O'Sullivan finally learns the truth and confronts O'Keefe at his office, where she teases him. He, in turn, finds out about her job and teases her by going to the gown shop, insisting that she model dresses that he ostensibly wanted to buy for his fiancée. Eventually they are happily united.

Stanley Rauh wrote the original story and screen play; Edwin L. Marin directed it, and John W. Considine produced it. In the cast are Jessie Ralph, Ed Brophy, Fay Holden, Frank Albertson and Phillip Terry.

Suitability, Class A.

### "The Saint in New York" with Louis Hayward and Kay Sutton

(RKO, June 3; time, 72 min.)

Patrons who enjoy gangster melodramas will find this engrossing program fare. It is lurid entertainment, to say the least, for, during the unfolding of the story, there are committed many murders. But, since it is the gangsters who are murdered, the picture is not demoralizing, for it really points out the moral that crime does not pay. The plot is far-fetched; but action-loving fans will probably overlook this, for the action is fast and, for the most part, thrilling. It seems likely that RKO intends to make a series of pictures based on the activities of "The Saint," whose single-handed fight against crime offers possibilities for such a series:—

Louis Hayward, an international adventurer known as "The Saint," is brought to New York by Frederic Burton, head of a citizens' committee that had been formed to fight crime. Hayward had become known for his daring accomplishments in wiping out criminal activity wherever he went. Burton gives Hayward the names of six of the most vicious criminals in the city, assuring him that he could proceed in any way he saw fit to rid the city of the criminals. Hayward tracks down the men and shows no hesitancy in killing them when the opportunity presented itself, for he had felt that such was the only way to deal with them. But his desire was to get to the leader, whose identity was known only to one person, a young girl (Kay Sutton), who was mixed up with the gang. Hayward falls in love with Miss Sutton, as she does with him, and, because of her desire to help him as well as to go straight, she promises to point out the leader. It develops that this leader was none other than Burton, whose scheme it was to have Hayward kill all the criminal leaders so that he would not have to share his loot with them. In a gun fight between Burton and Hayward, in the presence of Miss Sutton, both Burton and Miss Sutton are killed. Hayward is heartbroken; he leaves for another country.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Leslie Charteris; Charles Kaufman and Mortimer Offner wrote the screen play, Ben Holmes directed it, and William Sistrom produced it. In the cast are Sig Rumann, Jonathan Hale, and others.

Not quite suitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.



**"Blind Alibi" with Richard Dix,  
Whitney Bourne and Eduardo Ciannelli**  
(RKO, May 20; time, 61 min.)

A fairly good program melodrama. The story, although far-fetched, is novel, and holds one's attention throughout. Richard Dix is particularly likeable in the leading role. Starring honors next to him must be given to Ace, a marvelously intelligent police dog, who plays an important part in the story. During most of the picture Dix, in order to carry out his plans, had to pretend that he was blind; with keen understanding, Ace, his companion, leads him across streets and away from danger. The melodramatic angle is the result of the efforts of gangsters to obtain what Dix himself had been after. At times, the action is slow. It is only towards the end that it really becomes exciting. The love interest is pleasant:—

Dix, a sculptor in Paris, learns from his sister (Frances Mercer) that she was being blackmailed by a man with whom she had once been in love; he had letters she had written to him, which he threatened to publish unless she gave him a large sum of money. Miss Mercer, realizing that the publicity would ruin her husband, a French official, pleads with Dix to help her. In an effort to get the letters from the man's apartment, Dix enlists the aid of a friend, but just as the friend was leaving the blackmailer enters and chases after him. While passing an antique shop, he drops the letters in a piece of furniture. Dix later learns that the furniture had been shipped to a museum in California. Knowing that he would not be permitted to handle the furniture, Dix pretends to be blind; in that way he is given permission to touch anything at the museum he desired. Eduardo Ciannelli, a gangster, who had heard about the letters from the blackmailer, approaches Dix and, unaware of his identity, offers him money to find the letters. Dix finally finds them and immediately burns them. The gangsters are caught. But Dix is sentenced to one year imprisonment for having broken into the museum. Upon his release, he finds Whitney Bourne, who had worked at the museum, waiting for him.

William Joyce Cowan wrote the story, and Lionel Houser, Harry Segall, and Ron Ferguson, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Paul Guilfoyle, Richard Lane, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Better for adults. Class B.

**"Swiss Miss" with Stan Laurel, Oliver  
Hardy, Della Lind and Walter Woolf King**  
(MGM, May 20; time, 73 min.)

Mildly entertaining. Two or three sequences are comical; as a matter of fact they would have been perfect in a two-reel comedy. But the story was not substantial enough for a feature length picture, and so it had to be padded considerably; for this reason it falls extremely flat in spots, becoming tiresome. Many of the gags are old. The most comical situation is that in which Laurel and Hardy move a piano over a shaky bridge across a chasm. The other two scenes that should provoke laughter are those in which Laurel gets brandy from a St. Bernard dog by calling for help, and where he and Hardy pour water into a pipe organ from which bubbles emerge when Walter Woolf King starts playing it. King and Della Lind, a newcomer, handle the musical numbers well; and the background of the Swiss country is colorful:—

Laurel and Hardy, dealers in mousetraps, arrive at a Swiss mountain inn. Having sold their wares for what they thought was a considerable sum of money, they order an expensive meal only to find that the money they had been given was spurious. And so they are compelled to stay at the hotel to do menial labor under the supervision of a tyrannical chef. King, a composer, who had gone to the hotel for peace so as to compose a new opera, is disturbed when his wife (Miss Lind) arrives. He insists that she leave. But she decides to stay on as a chambermaid, in order to annoy him. Hardy falls in love with her and she leads him on, so that he would help her in her plans to win her husband over. Hardy is unhappy when he eventually learns that she was married.

Jean Ngulesco and Charles Rogers wrote the story, and James Parrott and Charles Melson, the screen play; John G. Blystone directed it, and S. S. Van Keuren was associate producer. In the cast are Eric Blore, Aida Kuznetsoff, Charles Judels, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Crime School" with Billy Halop,  
Humphrey Bogart and Gale Page**  
(First Nat'l., May 28; time, 84 min.)

The marvelous performances by the six boys who played in "Dead End" give this melodrama powerful box-office appeal, in spite of the fact that the plot is routine. In effect, it is a denunciation of the methods employed in reformatory schools, but it puts over its arguments without resorting to preachment. Some of the situations are pretty strong; particularly so is that in which Billy Halop, the leader of the boys, tries to escape from the reformatory by climbing a barbed wire fence. And the treatment in general given the boys by the head of the institution is not pleasant to see. But the sombreness is relieved by unusually good comedy, mainly by the wisecracks of the boys. During the first fifteen minutes, the boys' actions and talk keep the spectator laughing almost continuously. The romance is an important part of the story, for it is the cause of the excitement in the closing scenes. One is in deep sympathy with Humphrey Bogart, whose aid is the cause for the boys' eventual regeneration.

In the development of the plot, six boys, Halop, Leo Gorcey, Bobby Jordan, Huntz Hall, Gabriel Dell, and Bernard Punsley, slum residents, drift into petty thievery because of their surroundings and the lack of proper supervision. They are caught and sent to reform school, where, under the supervision of a cruel superintendent (Cy Kendall), they become really tough. Gale Page, Halop's sister, is heartbroken because she felt that her brother, given an opportunity, would amount to something. Upon investigating conditions at the reformatory, Bogart, deputy commissioner, realizes that Kendall's methods were wrong. He discharges him as well as his vicious guards, and sets about trying new and more humane methods. Kendall, in conspiracy with a guard (Weldon Heyburn), plans to break down Bogart's power. He does this by having one of the boys lead Halop into believing that the reason why Bogart had been good to him was because his sister had given herself to Bogart. Halop and his five pals escape in a car conveniently placed by Kendall, and rush to Miss Gale's apartment. There Halop confronts Bogart with a gun, which Kendall had left in the car. Bogart reasons with him and makes him see how he had been double-crossed. He rushes the boys back to the reformatory in time to thwart the plans of Kendall to have him ousted. Under Bogart's influence, the boys change for the better; when they are paroled they are ready to start life as decent citizens. Bogart and Miss Page are united.

Crane Wilbur wrote the story, and he and Vincent Sherman, the screen play; Lew Seiler directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are George Offerman, Jr., and others.

Too strong for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Air Devils" with Larry Blake  
and Dick Purcell**

(Universal, May 13; time, 60 min.)

Just a mild program comedy-melodrama, patterned along familiar lines. It is one of those "Flagg-Quirt" stories, in which two soldiers, this time attached to the Constabulary service in the South Sea Islands, are constantly quarreling, either about girls or about their respective assignments. There is nothing outstanding either in the production or the acting. It is only in the closing scenes that anything exciting happens, and even that lacks realism. There is no romantic interest:—

Larry Blake and Dick Purcell, both attached to the Constabulary service in the South Sea Islands, are constantly trying to outdo each other, both in their conquests of women and in their official duties. They both win and lose their Sergeant stripes, each one gloating over the other when the demotion occurs. Both become attached to Beryl Wallace, each one believing that he was the one favored with her love. A bandit revolutionary leader tries to take over the island and the constabulary supplies, including guns. But he is prevented from doing so. Both Blake and Purcell distinguish themselves by their bravery in capturing the bandit leader, and receive medals and promotion. They learn to their regret that Miss Wallace was really in love with some one else and had just used them to get to her sweetheart, who was at camp.

Harold Buckley wrote the story, and he and George Wagner, the screen play; John Rawlins directed it, and Paul Malvern produced it. In the cast are Mamo Clark, Charles Brokaw, Minerva Urecal, and others.

There is nothing morally wrong with the picture. Class A.



## AN APPRAISAL OF THE ABILITY OF UNIT PRODUCERS—No. 5

This is the last article of the series.

### Universal

JOE PASTERNAK, 2: "100 Men and a Girl" (Q-E::B-E-VG); "Mad About Music" (Q-E::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Three Smart Girls" (Q-VG::B-E-VG).

Excellent showing.

EDMUND GRAINGER, 7: "The Lady Fights Back" (Q-F::B-F); "A Girl with Ideas" (Q-F::B-FP); "Prescription for Romance" (Q-FP::B-F); "The Jury's Secret" (Q-FG::B-F); "Crime of Dr. Hallett" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported); "Goodbye Broadway" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported); "Nurse from Brooklyn" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "The Magnificent Brute" (Q-G::B-G); "Flying Hostess" (Q-F::B-GF); "Breezing Home" (Q-F::B-FP); "We Have Our Moments" (Q-F::B-F); "Let Them Live" (Q-F::B-F); "Oh Doctor" (Q-P::B-FP); "The Road Back" (Q-G::B-VG-G).

Fairly good showing.

BUDDY DESYLVIA, 2: "Merry Go Round of 1938" (Q-F::B-GF); "You're a Sweetheart" (Q-G::B-VG-G).

Fairly good showing.

E. M. ASHER, 2: "Man Who Cried Wolf" (Q-F::B-F); "Some Blondes Are Dangerous" (Q-FP::B-F).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Two in a Crowd" (Q-F::B-F); "Love Letters of a Star" (Q-F::B-F); "She's Dangerous" (Q-F::B-FP); "As Good as Married" (Q-FG::B-GF); "Wings over Honolulu" (Q-F::B-GF); "Love in a Bungalow" (Q-F::B-F); "Reported Missing" (Q-F::B-FP).

Fair showing.

PAUL MALVERN, 3: "Idol of the Crowds" (Q-FG::B-FP); "The Spy Ring" (Q-FP::B-FP); "State Police" (Q-P::B-Not Yet Reported).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "I Cover the War" (Q-FG::B-F).

Fair showing.

TREM CARR, 1: "The Midnight Intruder" (Q-G::B-GF).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Sea Spoilers" (Q-FP::B-F); "California Straight Ahead" (Q-F::B-FP).

Fair showing.

WALTER C. MYCROFT, 1: "Let's Make a Night of It" (Q-F::B-Not Yet Reported).

Fair showing.

IRVING STARR, 3: "The Westland Case" (Q-FP::B-FP); "The Black Doll" (Q-FP::B-FP); "Lady in the Morgue" (Q-FG::B-Not Yet Reported).

Fair to poor showing.

LOU BROCK, 1: "Behind the Mike" (Q-P::B-FP).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced: "Top of the Town" (Q-F::B-G).

Poor showing.

ROBERT PRESNELL, 2: "Carnival Queen" (Q-P::B-P); "That's My Story" (Q-P::B-FP).

In the 1936-37 season, he produced "The Girl on the Front Page" (Q-F::B-F); "Four Days Wonder" (Q-P::B-FP); "Girl Overboard" (Q-FP::B-FP); "When Love Is Young" (Q-FG::B-F); "Night Key" (Q-F::B-FP).

Poor showing.

## SAM GOLDWYN'S GRATITUDE!

In last week's issue a discussion was made of the effect the Goldwyn interview in the newspapers has had upon the business. The reproduction of Mr. Steffes' letter, answering Mr. Goldwyn's "kick" against the quality of the pictures that have been released lately, and the dark outlook so far as improvement is concerned, was answered effectively by Mr. Steffes.

After reading Mr. Goldwyn's interview again, I gathered the impression that he, in giving that interview,

sought to boost foreign pictures. He is making a deal with Korda, the producer who is making pictures in England with the backing of English capital and, in my opinion, he felt that there was a chance for him to introduce to the American public the pictures his company may handle.

If my assumption should be correct, then I take it that Mr. Goldwyn did not hesitate to "sink" the American ship so that the foreign ship might remain afloat. That's gratitude!

## THE 1938-39 SEASON'S FORECASTER BEGINS IN A WEEK

Within a week after you read these lines, mailing of forecasts for the 1938-39 season will begin.

The check up of the forecasts for the 1937-38 season showed an accuracy of 88.62%. Such an accuracy is, indeed, noteworthy when one takes into consideration that what is forecast is, not the finished material, but the original material, whether it is a novel, a stage play or a magazine story, before it is treated. In other words, only the material in the raw is read.

As a matter of fact, some of the forecasts could be lifted bodily and used as reviews; so accurate were they.

Some exhibitors say: "What's the use of my subscribing to this service when I have to buy every picture that I can get?" The Forecaster service has not been designed to help you buy product, but to let you know whether the pictures which the salesman offers you and which he praises to high heaven are as he describes them or not. He knows about such pictures only from what the home office tells him. With the information supplied you by the Forecaster, you will be able to give him a lesson. If you have to buy the pictures he sells, you will at least be able to show him that some of the pictures he sells as "Superspecials" will not turn out to be even good program pictures. Consequently, you will be able to make him come off his high horse, to a certain extent, as far as prices go. The cost of this service is so small as compared with the benefit you may receive that you should not hesitate in subscribing at once. No matter how little the benefit, it will be more than its cost.

Subscription blanks for this service, giving the prices for different types of theatres, were mailed to almost all subscribers two weeks ago. If you have not received a copy, ask for one.

## "DO AS I SAY—NOT AS I DO!"

Pete Wood, business manager of The Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, has sent me the following letter:

"I have just finished reading the item on page 76 of your May 7th issue, 'Answer this, Mr. Sears!'

"Supplementing your article, exhibitors might be interested to learn that the biggest 'Bank Night' operated in the State of Ohio is in the Warner Theatres, at Springfield, where four (4) theatres are hooked up by telephone. The ticket sale on 'Bank Night' day commences early in the morning and continues through until the hour of the drawing. All the foregoing irrespective of the fact that Warner operates every theatre in Springfield with the exception of one 300 seat house."

Mr. Sears reminds me of the preacher who does not follow his own preaching, saying to his congregation in effect: "Never mind what I do! Don't do as I do; do as I say!"

## LOOK OVER YOUR FILES

While the issue of May 7 was being mailed, a few copies of Section Two got mixed up with the copies of Section One, so that some envelopes contained two copies of Section Two, instead of one copy of each Section.

Examine your files and if you find that you have received two copies of Section Two, let us know and a copy of Section One will be mailed to you by return mail.

While looking into this matter, you might just as well examine your file of Harrison's Reports more thoroughly to see if there are copies of any other issue missing so that you may order duplicate copies at the same time. A sufficient number of copies of many old issues is kept in stock for just such a purpose.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, MAY 28, 1938

No. 22

### THE NEELY BILL PASSED THE SENATE

The Neely Bill has, as you already know, passed the Senate.

The news reached Pittsburgh Tuesday afternoon, May 17, and caused rejoicing among the exhibitors who were attending the annual national Allied convention.

It is almost unbelievable that the exhibitors should have succeeded in going as far as that, for their efforts have been long and hard. It was in 1928 when a bill of this kind was first introduced in the Senate, by Senator Brookhart.

That it should have taken so long for the exhibitors to succeed should not surprise any one; with the resources at the disposal of the producers it is a wonder that they have succeeded to have such a bill passed in the Senate at all.

The battle is not, of course, over; the House of Representatives must pass it and the President must sign it before it becomes a law. But, unless you relax your efforts, there is no doubt that it will pass also the lower House.

The producers hope that there will be no time for the House of Representatives to consider the Bill at this session; and unless the House passes it at this session, you will have to do the work all over again at the next session. But Pete Wood, business manager of The Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, feels that the House can pass it at this session, and suggests that every one of you write to his Congressman to vote for the Neely Bill S. 153, or under whatever other number it may appear as a House Bill. And HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that you heed Pete's advice.

Many exhibitor leaders deserve credit for having kept up the fight for the passage of the Bill year after year; but the one who deserves the most credit is Abram F. Myers, chief council of Allied States Association. It was he who led the fight and guided those who were taking part in it, no matter whether they were exhibitors or only friends from the outside.

Incidentally, the Bill passed the Senate with only one minor change; the second paragraph of Section 4, giving the right to the exhibitor to cancel the contract if the story of the finished picture did not conform with the synopsis, was struck out at the suggestion, according to the trade papers, of Senator Borah, lest this provision nullify the entire bill; the Senator said, according to the same papers, that the law itself protects the contract holder when the goods do not come up to the specifications.

### A DISTRIBUTOR EXECUTIVE GAINING EXHIBITOR GOOD WILL

W. F. Rodgers, head of distribution of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, is beginning to get the notice of the independent exhibitors, not as a head of the distributing department of a big company, but as a man seeking sincerely to bring about a better understanding between distributors and exhibitors.

The first time that he came to the attention of the organized exhibitors in that role was at the convention of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest, in Minneapolis, held on January 31, February 1 and 2. Mr. W. A. Steffes, president of the organization, who had long been seeking to persuade the distributors to make a last minute effort to get together with the exhibitors, had the foresightedness to invite him. And he was not disappointed, for Mr. Rodgers made a deep impression among the exhibitors present as desiring sincerely to accomplish something for the good of the entire industry. He received a cordial reception from the exhibitors.

The next time he appeared before an exhibitor body was in Boston, at the Allied convention of that region last

month. Mr. Myers was, in fact, so impressed with Mr. Rodgers' sincerity that he commented upon that fact to the exhibitors, expressing the hope that Mr. Rodgers will receive the backing that is due him from his own people.

The last time he appeared before exhibitors in the capacity of peacemaker was in Pittsburgh last week, at the national Allied convention. And his reception was just as warm as it was at the two preceding conventions.

Mr. Rodgers does not possess any magic tricks in his ability to capture the exhibitor good will; all the tricks he possesses are sincerity and willingness to see the other fellows' point of view.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that the distributor side will capitalize upon Mr. Rodgers' ability to get into the graces of the independent exhibitors, particularly of the exhibitor leaders, who have come to feel that what Mr. Rodgers promises he delivers. The producers have been looking for some way by which they could get together with the exhibitors and in a sincere effort try to put an end to abuses and bring about better relationship among the different industry branches. Here's their chance.

Incidentally, HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to say that Mr. W. A. Steffes deserves great credit for having brought Mr. Rodgers to the attention of all the other exhibitors.

### THE VIEWS OF A NEW EXHIBITOR BODY ON THE NEELY BILL

There has been a split in Southern California among the independent exhibitors. Many progressive exhibitors, irked by the apathy of the Independent Theatre Owners of Southern California towards the Neely Bill and other pressing independent exhibitor matters, broke away and formed The American Federation of Theatres.

The following is a statement that it has issued about the passage of the Neely Bill:

"The Neely Bill, prohibiting block-booking and blind selling, surprised everyone, including, perhaps, its sponsors, by coming through the Senatorial furnace this week almost unscorched. It is true that it had a couple of barnacles grafted onto it (well, let's not say 'grafted,' let's say 'attached') but it will serve its purpose pretty well for all that.

"And if anyone thinks that getting a bill like that through ANY legislative body, let alone the United States Senate, isn't a superman-sized job, let him pick some controversial piece of legislation, the simplest he can find to begin with, take it by its little hand and try to lead it through the crystal maze of having it enacted into law. He'll learn some things that he won't particularly like and he will come away marveling that any piece of legislation beneficial to the people who pay the bills, that is to say, the bewildered taxpayers, is ever able to survive and become a law.

"He'll be amazed at the brazen wire-pulling and leg-pulling; the coatroom conferences; the phony organization set-ups; people, on the payroll of privilege, who cloak their activities under the guise of Presidents, Secretaries and the like of well-known clubs and associations; (in the motion picture situation may be found 'independent' theatre owner associations controlled lock, stock and barrel by producers; ) midnight poker parties . . . ; the back-patting; the threats of reprisals in his campaign for re-election if he doesn't play ball; the taken-for-granted 'you vote my way on my bill and I'll vote your way on yours' procedure; the 'public-be-damned' attitude; the dust thrown in the eyes of the honest legislators . . . ; the persistent pressure from a thousand different sources and in a thousand different

(Continued on last page)



### **"Yellow Jack" with Robert Montgomery and Virginia Bruce**

(MGM, May 27; time, 83 min.)

Metro is deserving of praise for the intelligent and sincere way in which they have presented the subject of the fight waged by American doctors and soldiers after the Spanish-American war, in an attempt to wipe out the dread yellow fever disease that was raging in Cuba. And praise too must go to the performers. But it is entertainment mainly for serious-minded audiences, for it is doubtful if the masses will find the subject matter to their tastes. There is no denying that the story is absorbing, but at the same time it is depressing. The constant reference to the disease, the scenes of suffering and death, and the drabness of the background are hardly conducive to relaxation and enjoyment. Of course, the heroism of five soldiers in offering themselves to the doctors for experimental work is inspiring; it is also the source of some excellent comedy bits. The most amusing part of the picture is brought about by the wisecracks made by Sam Levene, known as "Busch," who, together with two other soldiers, had been placed in a dirty, smelly room as part of the experimental work. The love interest is of slight importance:—

Major Reed (Lewis Stone) and his assistants, after a year of intensive experimental work, find themselves no further advanced in the discovery of the cause and cure of yellow fever than when they had started. Following a new theory offered by Dr. Finlay (Charles Coburn), that a certain mosquito was the germ carrier, they continue with their experimental work along that line; but they needed men for the work since animals could not be infected. Sergeant O'Hara (Robert Montgomery), an easy-going Irishman, and his four buddies finally offer themselves. Two of them get the fever but are cured, since the doctors knew how to fight it. Through their bravery, the cause and cure is discovered and the disease is finally conquered. Montgomery had, in the meantime, fallen in love with Frances Blake (Virginia Bruce), a nurse connected with Major Reed's outfit; he promises to give up wandering about in order to marry her.

The plot was adapted from the play by Sidney Howard in collaboration with Paul de Kruif; Edward Chodorov wrote the screen play, George B. Seitz directed it, and Jack Cummings produced it. In the cast are Andy Devine, Henry Hull, Buddy Ebsen, Henry O'Neill, Janet Beecher, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Main Event" with Robert Paige and Jacqueline Wells**

(Columbia, May 5; time, 55 min.)

A fair program murder mystery melodrama. The only thing that makes it acceptable screen fare is the fact that the action is fast; the story is extremely far-fetched, to the point where at times it is almost ridiculous. It is evident that an attempt was made by the producer to copy in some manner the comedy idea of "There's Always a Woman," by making the detective's girl friend a scatter-brained pest; but as it turned out it remained just an idea. There is, however, plentiful gun and fist fighting to satisfy the action fans:—

Paige, a detective, in company with his girl friend (Jacqueline Wells), goes to see a heavyweight championship bout. Arthur Loft, the fight promoter, is shocked when he receives word that the champion had been kidnapped, and that a \$20,000 ransom was demanded for his return. Paige is called to Loft's office, where he is given the details. Loft pleads with him to help him out of the mess. Paige decides to drive the car to the spot designated by the kidnappers, and to take with him one of the ushers to turn over the money. Miss Wells dresses in an usher's outfit and hides in the car. Paige is furious when he realizes that she had taken the usher's place; but they had to go through with the plans. When she turns the bag over to the kidnappers they force her into their car. Paige and his men start out in search of the gang; this leads them into many exciting situations. Paige finally solves it, by proving that the champion had had himself kidnapped, so as

to make some easy money without fighting for it. The money is returned to Loft, and the champion is forced to go into the ring. He is knocked out in the first round. But Paige and Miss Wells don't mind, for they had had an exciting enough evening.

Harold Shumate wrote the story, and Lee Loeb, the screen play; Danny Dare directed it, and Ralph Cohn produced it. In the cast are John Gallaudet, Thurston Hall, and others.

Not for children. Class B.

### **"Cocoanut Grove" with Fred MacMurray and Harriet Hilliard**

(Paramount, May 20; time, 90 min.)

Although not spectacular in production or novel in story, this musical has enough ingredients for mass appeal. It has some very good tunes, comedy and romance. It is all right while it sticks to music, but the moment the plot emerges the action drags, for the story is far-fetched and at times pretty silly. The Yacht Club Boys, Ben Blue, and Rufe Davis go through the same old gags, the same old routines as in their other pictures, with the result that their appeal is directed mainly towards their fans. Fred MacMurray is at a slight disadvantage because of the negative role he enacts; but as usual he acts with ease, handles the romantic interest effectively, and sings well:—

MacMurray and the members of his band are on the verge of disbanding due to their inability to get a decent booking. Inspired by Harriet Hilliard, tutor to MacMurray's adopted boy (Billy Lee), they decide to stick together in an effort to get to California in order to try out for the unknown band contest conducted by the famous Cocoanut Grove. After hardships and amusing experiences, they finally land there. Through a mixup in connections, another band is picked instead of MacMurray's, which was the one that the owner had actually listened to. On the night of the new band's debut, MacMurray learns about the mixup. He rounds up his musicians and gets to the Grove in time to stop the other band from going on. His band and entertainers are wildly acclaimed. With their future assured, MacMurray and Miss Hilliard plan to marry.

Sy Bartlett and Olive Cooper wrote the story and screen play; Alfred Santell directed it, and George M. Arthur produced it. In the cast are Eve Arden, Harry Owens and orchestra, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"The Devil's Party" with Victor McLaglen, William Gargan, Paul Kelly and Beatrice Roberts**

(Universal, May 20; time, 65 min.)

A fairly good program gangster melodrama, with a sentimental touch; this is brought about by the friendship existing between four men and a girl since their childhood days. One of the men (Victor McLaglen) turns out to be a racketeer, owner of a night club, one (Paul Kelly) a priest, and the other two (William Gargan and John Gallaudet) policemen. The girl (Beatrice Roberts) is a singer at McLaglen's club. The spectator is held in suspense, knowing that in some way friendship would conflict with duty. Despite McLaglen's activities, one feels pity for him when he becomes the indirect cause of Gallaudet's death. Knowing that his henchmen had left damaging evidence at the scene of a murder, and hearing that Gallaudet was suspicious and intended to investigate, McLaglen orders them to go back to the scene of the crime and get rid of the evidence; he promises to hold Gallaudet at his night club until the work was done. But Gallaudet manages to get away and surprises the criminals at their work. They kill him. Gargan, through investigation, realizes McLaglen's guilt and is determined to kill him. He is stopped by Kelly. The murderers, eager to get rid of both McLaglen and Gargan, plan to bring them together; at the point of a gun they force McLaglen to accompany them to a robbery; they had tipped off Gargan in advance. But McLaglen redeems himself by stepping in front of Gargan, receiving the bullet in-



tended for Gargan by the murderers. He dies in the presence of the three remaining friends, who are in tears. Gargan and Miss Roberts are united.

Borden Chase wrote the story, and Roy Chanslor, the screen play; Ray McCarey directed it, and Edmund Grainger produced it. In the cast are Frank Jenks, Samuel Hinds, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### **"Numbered Woman" with Sally Blane, Lloyd Hughes and Mayo Methot**

(Monogram, May 22; time, 63 min.)

This melodrama is good program entertainment. Well-written, directed, and acted, it holds one's attention throughout, due to the sympathy one feels for the heroine in her attempt to obtain evidence to clear her brother. Sally Blane acts the heroine's part convincingly, and is an appealing character. The lighter touch is given the picture by Mayo Methot, as the gangster's moll; her wisecracks are certain to provoke hearty laughter. There is exciting action throughout, particularly in the closing scenes, which hold one in tense suspense. The love interest is subdued:—

When Sally Blane, head nurse at a small-town hospital run by her doctor sweetheart (Lloyd Hughes), finds out that her brother (John Arledge) had been arrested on a charge of stealing bonds from his firm, she rushes to his side. She is convinced, from the story he tells her, that he was the innocent victim of an organized gang of crooks. With the help of the police inspector (J. Farrell MacDonald), she manages to get in with the gang by obtaining a position as private nurse to the leader (Clay Clement), who had undergone a serious operation. He falls in love with her and confides in her. Her work is disrupted for a time by Miss Methot, the girl friend of Morgan Wallace, one of the crooks; Miss Methot does not trust her. By means of a false charge which was part of the plan, Miss Blane is arrested. The lawyer for the crooks, wanting to get Miss Methot out of the way, manages to get her arrested; the two girls are cellmates. When Hughes arrives to bail out Miss Blane, which was not part of the plan, Miss Blane sees a chance to win Miss Methot's confidence; she induces Hughes to bail out Miss Methot, too. She then goes to the hideout with her. In the meantime, the lawyer, learning who Miss Blane really was, rushes to the hideout. Clement is disappointed in Miss Blane, and plans to kill her. But when Wallace tries to kill her, Clement protects her; in a gun fight, both he and Wallace are killed. The rest of the gang is rounded up. With the evidence she had obtained, Miss Blane clears her brother. She and Hughes are united.

John T. Neville wrote the story and the screen play, Karl Brown directed it, and E. B. Derr produced it with Frank Melford as associate producer. In the cast are Ward Bond, Robert Fiske, and others.

Not for children. Suitability, Class B.

### **"Hunted Men" with Lloyd Nolan, Mary Carlisle and Lynne Overman**

(Paramount, May 27; running time, 66 min.)

This gangster melodrama is good program entertainment. The story is a little different in that, instead of concentrating on the activities of the gangsters, it shows the regeneration of a killer under the influence of a normal, decent American family. The plot is somewhat far-fetched; nevertheless it holds one's attention well mainly because of the sympathy one feels for Lynne Overman and his wife, who innocently become involved with the killer. It has its share of comedy and human appeal; also a constant undercurrent of excitement caused by the danger to the members of the family. The closing scenes are thrilling:—

Lloyd Nolan, racketeer leader, kills Larry Crabbe, night club owner, who had double-crossed him. Knowing that a waiter had seen him leave, Nolan realizes that he must hide. While crossing the street, he is knocked down by the automobile driven by Overman,

a simple business man, who had become intoxicated at a business convention dinner. He pretends to be one of the men Overman had met at the dinner, and in that way gets him to invite him to his home; as a matter of fact, Overman was glad to have company because he was afraid to face his wife (Dorothy Peterson). Nolan's henchmen, having followed Overman's car, telephone Nolan and insist that he remain at Overman's home, where no one would think of looking for him. Nolan makes his identity known to Overman and his wife, who are shocked; he promises protection for them and their two children providing they would not talk. Mary Carlisle, the daughter, becomes infatuated with Nolan, but he disillusiones her, sending her back to the arms of her young sweetheart (Johnny Downs). But the young son (Delmar Watson) worships Nolan, and even takes him into his "G-Man" organization. Through a snapshot that Delmar had taken of Nolan, the police trace him to the hideout. They surround the house and threaten to shoot unless Nolan would leave. Having been regenerated by his association with the family and not wishing to see them come to harm, he leaves by the front door and is killed by the police. Delmar cries bitterly upon learning Nolan's identity.

The plot was based on the play by Albert Duffy and Marian Grant; Horace McCoy and William R. Lipman wrote the screen play, Louis King directed it, and Stuart Walker produced it. In the cast are J. Carroll Nash, Anthony Quinn, Regis Toomey, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### **"Little Miss Thoroughbred" with John Littel, Ann Sheridan and Janet Chapman**

(Warner Bros., June 4; time, 63 min.)

Fair program entertainment; it mixes comedy with heart appeal. The story is slightly reminiscent of "Little Miss Marker," in that a child is the cause of the regeneration of a hard-boiled gambler, who at first thinks of her only as some one who brings him luck. The child is played by Janet Chapman, a newcomer, who shows remarkable talent for one so young; her charming little ways, wistful manner, and expressive eyes touch one's heartstrings. There are a few situations that bring tears to the eyes. The most effective scene is that which takes place in a courtroom where the child weepingly pleads with the Judge, who tried to tell her the gambler was not her father, to say that he was making a mistake. Comedy is provoked by the wisecracks and slang expressions employed by Frank McHugh. The love interest is pleasant:—

Janet, an orphan, dreams of a father who would some day call for her and take her away from the orphanage. She runs away in an effort to find him. Bewildered by the traffic and the noise, she faints; a policeman calls for an ambulance. John Littel, a race track gambler, and his pal (McHugh), who had just pawned their watches to place a bet on a horse, eager to get to the track in time, follow the ambulance. When they are stopped by a policeman, McHugh pretends that they were following the ambulance in which Littel's child was being taken to the hospital. The policeman escorts them to the hospital; Janet hears something said about her father and greets Littel with kisses, thinking he really was her father. Littel is compelled to take her home with him. When his luck changes for the better, he feels that Janet was the cause of it; in time he grows to love her. He marries Ann Sheridan, a former night club singer, in order to keep up appearances; but he eventually realizes he loved her. The authorities catch up with him, his wife, McHugh, and Janet, and arrest the three adults on a kidnapping charge. At the trial, Janet's tears and refusal to believe that Littel was not her father so move the jury that they dismiss the case. Littel promises to give up gambling, and legally adopts Janet.

Albert DeMond wrote the story, and he and George Bricker, the screen play; John Farrow directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. Robert Homans, Eric Stanley, Jean Benedict, and others are in the cast.

Not particularly suitable for children. Class B.



ways that is engineered by well-heeled lobbyists makes it easily understandable why it takes so long to crash through with any needed legislation for the public good.

"So what has been accomplished in Washington in the matter of this protective piece of legislation which has just gone through the Senate merits the hearty acclaim and grateful recognition of every independent theatre owner in the country. What if the bill should not get through the House this session and would consequently have to be revived when the Legislature convenes again? There's no reason for discouragement in that. Rome wasn't built in a day and neither was any exhibitor's business. Both required patient planning and waiting and working, as well as repeated disappointments.

"The AMERICAN FEDERATION OF THEATRES goes on record as stating, without fear of successful contradiction, that the elimination of block-booking and blind selling would be the healthiest thing that could happen right now to the motion picture business. Entirely aside from the unquestioned stimulant to the ailing box-offices of the country it would be the greatest single thing that could happen to the interests of the very people who are now fighting it teeth and toe-nail, the producers. It would have the almost immediate effect of cleaning out the dead timber that is now clogging the production machinery and has slowed it down to a walk; the useless relatives, the aimless executives, the horde of incompetents in every line; it would strip the studios down to fighting trim where ability to produce results would be the only recognized yardstick and would result in new highs being set for quality entertainment.

"If Hollywood could and would see its possibilities, and live up to them, it would open up a brand new era in the amusement business.

"If it doesn't, and that mighty soon, well—Quien sabe?" The Pacific Coast Showman, commenting on the situation, said the following in its May 20th issue:

"Here in the Southern California district, the ITO group is maintaining a more or less neutral attitude on the question, with no action having ever been taken either to approve or condemn the measure while it was up before the Senate. Leaders of the Independent exhibitors organization have withheld comment on the Neely bill, but the rank and file of the ITO freely approve and equally condemn it at about the same ratio.

"James C. Quinn, managing director of the new American Federation of Theatres recently launched here, is in hearty accord with the bill, and in a statement issued yesterday, he says in part, 'The AFOT goes on record as stating that the elimination of block-booking and blind selling would be the healthiest thing that could happen right now to the motion picture business. . . .'

The division of opinion among the independent exhibitors is, it is assumed, owed to bad exhibitor leadership.

## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 1

This is the fourth series of articles giving the box-office performances of 1937-38 season's pictures. The first series was printed beginning with the October 23 issue; the second, beginning with the December 18 issue; and the third, beginning with the March 5 issue.

### Columbia

"Wide Open Faces," with Joe E. Brown and Jane Wyman, produced by David E. Loew and directed by Kurt Neumann, from a screen play by Earle Snell, Clarence Marks, and Joe Bigelow: Good-Poor.

"Heroes of the Alamo," with Edward Piel and Ruth Findlay, directed by Harry Fraser, from a screen play by Roby Wentz: Fair-Poor.

"Who Killed Gale Preston," with Don Terry and Wyn Cahoon, produced by Ralph Cohn and directed by Leon Barsha, from a screen play by Robert E. Kent and Henry Taylor: Fair-Poor.

"Start Cheering," with Walter Connolly, Jimmy Durante, Charles Starrett, and Joan Perry, produced by Nat Perrin and directed by Albert S. Rogell, from a screen play by Eugene Solow, Philip Rapp and Richard Wormser: Good-Poor.

"Rolling Caravans," with John Luden and Eleanor Stewart, directed by Joseph Levering, from a screen play by Nate Gatzert: Fair-Poor.

"Making the Headlines," with Jack Holt, Craig Reynolds, and Beverly Roberts, produced by Larry Darmour and directed by Lewis D. Collins, from a screen play by Howard J. Green and Jefferson Parker: Fair-Poor.

"Woman Against the World," with Ralph Forbes, Alice Moore and Edgar Edwards, produced by Lew Golder and directed by David Selman, from a screen play by Edgar Edwards: Fair-Poor.

"The Lone Wolf in Paris," with Francis Lederer and Frances Drake, produced by Wallace MacDonald and directed by Albert S. Rogell, from a screen play by Arthur T. Horman: Good-Fair.

"When G-Men Step In," with Don Terry, Robert Paige and Jacqueline Wells, produced by Wallace MacDonald and directed by C. C. Coleman, Jr., from a screen play by Arthur T. Horman: Fair-Poor.

"The Overland Express," with Buck Jones and Marjorie Reynolds, directed by Drew Ebersson, from a screen play by Monroe Shaff: Good-Poor.

"Flight into Nowhere," with Jack Holt, Dick Purcell and Jacqueline Wells, produced by Larry Darmour and directed by Lewis D. Collins, from a screen play by Jefferson Parker and Gordon Rigby: Fair.

"There's Always a Woman," with Joan Blondell and Melvyn Douglas, produced by William Perlberg and directed by Alexander Hall, from a screen play by Gladys Lehman: Very Good-Poor (mostly good).

"Extortion," with Scott Colton and Mary Russell, produced by Ralph Cohn and directed by Lambert Hillyer, from a screen play by Earl Felton: Fair.

"Call of the Rockies," with Charles Starrett and Iris Meredith, produced by Harry L. Decker and directed by Allan James, from a screen play by Ed Earl Repps: Fair-Poor.

Thirty-eight pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 2; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Good-Poor, 4; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 17; Poor, 1.

The first 38 of the 1936-37 season, excluding Westerns, were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 4; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 13; Poor, 8.

### First National

"A Slight Case of Murder," with Edward G. Robinson, Jane Bryan, Ruth Donnelly and Willard Parker, produced by Sam Bischoff and directed by Lloyd Bacon, from a screen play by Earl Baldwin and Joseph Schrank: Excellent-Good (mostly good).

"Fools for Scandal," with Carole Lombard and Fernand Gravet, produced and directed by Mervyn LeRoy, from a screen play by Herbert Fields and Joseph Fields: Fair-Poor.

"Women Are Like That," with Kay Francis and Pat O'Brien, produced by Robert Lord and directed by Stanley Logan, from a screen play by Horace Jackson: Fair-Poor.

"Beloved Brat," with Dolores Costello, Bonita Granville, and Donald Crisp, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by Arthur Lubin, from a screen play by Lawrence Kimble: Fair-Poor.

"Torchy Blane in Panama," with Lola Lane and Paul Kelly, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by William Clemens, from a screen play by George Bricker: Fair-Poor.

"Adventures of Robin Hood," with Errol Flynn, Olivia DeHavilland, Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains, produced by Henry Blanke and directed by Michael Curtiz and William Keighley, from a screen play by Norman Reilly Raine and Seton I. Miller: Excellent-Very Good.

Twenty-two pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 5.

The first 22 of the 1936-37 season, excluding Westerns, were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 3; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 2.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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No. 23

## WILL THE PRODUCERS EVER LEARN A LESSON?

According to authoritative information, the producers have found a new way of putting pressure on the exhibitors. Whenever an exhibitor goes to an exchange to ask for a favor, he receives the following reply, not in the words given but in the spirit: "If you want me to grant this request of yours, sign this letter and send it to your Congressman." And the form letter, which requests the Congressman to vote against the Neely Bill, is ready for the exhibitor to copy.

Such a pressure has been brought, it seems, against the independent circuits the most, for, according to an informant of mine, the managers of a circuit have been requested to write letters to their Congressmen.

I have no doubt that Allied States will bring this matter to the attention of every Congressman, just as it did in the case where a list of senators was supplied to every important producer-member of the Hays Association, with a request to bring pressure upon those senators for the defeat of the Neely Bill. What this paper desires to record is the fact that the producers do not seem to have learned their lesson. They do not realize that a new kind of wind is blowing—that the legislators in Washington are inclined to listen to the voice of the voters more carefully and be guided by such a voice. Do they doubt it? Let them study what happened in Washington last week, when Congressman Pettengill rose on a question of personal privilege and spoke about the Neely Bill. A Congressman remarked to Mr. Pettengill: "Who is against this Bill? I thought that there was no one opposing it" (not in these words but in this meaning).

The best thing the producers can do is to discard their former ideas and start doing things in a different way, a more human way. And that way is by conferring with exhibitor representatives with a view to settling the industry problems amicably, fairly and justly. They must, however, be prepared to give, if they want to be given. Without such a change of point-of-view, no amicable adjustment of these problems can be arrived at. Above all, they must put their propaganda machine into disuse.

## THEY DO THINGS IN ENGLAND!

For several years a group of persons representing American interests in Great Britain met for luncheon in a private room of the famous Soho restaurant to discuss and decide upon the grading of American films for release there. The grades were "A" and "B." The "B's" could be obtained at a flat rental basis; the "A's" only on percentage.

Strangely the day on which these interests met coincided with the announcement of new film programs.

It was on that day that they decided, without consulting those who were affected most directly, the exhibitors, that programs were too long, that the two-feature bill was destructive to their business, that one feature, along with the shorts required, should be sufficient for the admission prices generally charged, and many other related problems.

As you see, in England there isn't such a law as the Sherman Act, or the Clayton Act, and they can make such decisions without committing an act of conspiracy.

The exhibitors there resented this arbitrary grading of pictures and, after standing it as long as they could, decided to revolt.

Through their organization, the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association of Great Britain, they started a fight.

Their first move was to notify the representatives of the American distributors to change their tactics; then they held regional, or provincial, meetings. And while doing these things, they took the daily press into their confidence and asked its support. And the press, to a paper almost,

took the side of the exhibitors, acquainting the public with the facts, and criticising the American producers' methods.

And what do you think has happened? The distributors, if one is to assume that the dispatches in the New York trade papers are correct, have capitulated.

The American exhibitors should take a leaf out of the British exhibitors' book. If they should have acted as the British exhibitors have acted, the Neely Bill would have been a law several years ago, and there would have been a theatre-divorce measure in almost every state of the Union by this time. Instead of acting together, however, as the British exhibitors have acted, they allowed the producers to lead them into believing that a bill such as the Neely Bill will prove destructive to their interests. They did not stop to count the number of exhibitors that have been driven out of business since the producers went into theatre operation on a wholesale scale; they did not stop to think of the fact that only two independent producer-distributors have been left; they did not bring back to their mind the number of major companies that were in existence ten years ago and the number that exist now; they failed to enumerate the restrictions they have placed upon the purchase of film—the percentage terms, the number of films demanded on percentage, the preferred playing time, the clearance, and above all their inability to buy film at a suitable run when there is an affiliated theatre in competition with them. Thus they caused a delay in the passage of the bill to outlaw block-booking and blind-selling, the enactment into law of which would have signaled the beginning of better days for the independent exhibitors.

Such has been the short-sightedness of some exhibitors that I have seen one of them, a leader, on the one hand protesting against the intolerable conditions imposed by the distributors, and on the other, taking a stand against the Neely Bill.

The American exhibitors should learn a lesson from the action of the exhibitors in Great Britain.

## ANOTHER BLOW AT THE PRODUCERS

When the U. S. Supreme Court remanded the case of *United States v. Interstate Circuit et al.*, in which the Dallas District Court had entered a decree against the defendant, to the District Court in Texas for findings of fact and law, the producers heralded this fact through the trade papers as a victory for the defendant producers.

In accordance with the recommendation of the U. S. Supreme Court, Judge Atwell, the District Judge who tried the case, has just made formal findings. These must have shocked the master strategists of the producers; they are so sweeping that it is doubtful whether the defendants will take an appeal. If they should take such an appeal, all they could possibly accomplish would be to add the U. S. Supreme Court's approval to the damaging findings and decree of the Dallas District Court. (Just before going to press, the trade papers announced that an appeal will be taken.)

Here are a few extracts from Judge Atwell's "Findings of Fact, and Conclusions of Law":

Under, "Conspiracy":

"21. . . . The most important issue in the case was whether the distributor defendants, in agreeing with Interstate to impose restrictions, acted pursuant to an agreement or understanding among themselves, and facts material to this issue were within the peculiar knowledge of the superior officials.

"22. From the facts set forth in findings 12 to 21, inclusive, and particularly from the unanimity of action on the part of the distributor defendants, not in one respect only,

(Continued on last page)



**"Gangs of New York" with Charles Bickford, Ann Dvorak and Wynne Gibson**

(*Republic, May 16; time, 67 min.*)

A fast-moving gangster melodrama. Despite a somewhat far-fetched plot, it holds one in tense suspense throughout. The acting and production values are good, and the direction intelligent. What makes it exciting is the fact that Charles Bickford (the hero), a police officer, who was the image of a notorious gangster (played also by Bickford), imprisoned for tax-evasion, takes the gangster's place as head of the gang in order to get the information to break up the racketeering ring. There are many thrilling situations, which are caused by the danger to Bickford, who had to be careful not to give himself away. One is in deep sympathy with him because of his courage in the face of danger:—

On the day that the gangster was to be released from prison, the warden, working with police officials, locks the gangster up in a secret cell. In his place is released Bickford, the police officer, who was the image of the gangster. Having studied the gangster's ways, manners, and speech, he felt capable of fooling the members of the gang. And things work out as he had planned. The only one who had some suspicion is Wynne Gibson, who could not understand the supposed gangster's coolness to her, considering their former intimacy. She is enraged when Bickford pays attention to Ann Dvorak, a night club singer, whose brother had joined the gang. Bickford finally gets the gangster leaders together; they turn over their secret records to him. According to plans, the police were supposed to raid the place. But the gangster, aided by a bribed guard, escapes and confronts Bickford at the hideout before the police raid. The gangsters jump on Bickford, ready to kill him. But the police arrive in time to save him and round up the gang and their leaders; one of the gangsters, mistaking the escaped gangster for the police officer, kills him. With the case finished and his identity revealed, Bickford proposes to Miss Dvorak, who accepts him. Her brother decides to go straight.

Sam Fuller wrote the story, and Wellyn Totman, Sam Fuller, and Charles Francis Royal, the screen play; James Cruze directed it, and Armand Schaefer produced it. In the cast are Alan Baxter, Harold Huber, Willard Robertson, Maxie Rosenbloom, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Gold Diggers in Paris" with Rudy Vallee, Rosemary Lane and Allen Jenkins**

(*Warner Bros., June 11; time, 96 min.*)

Although up to the level of the previous "Gold Diggers" as far as production values are concerned, this version lacks star names of box-office value. The story, as is usual in musicals of this type, is thin, the stress being laid on the music and comedy. Some of the tunes are good, and are put over well by Rosemary Lane and Rudy Vallee; they should strike the public's fancy. For a novelty, there is the Schnickelfritz Band, whose antics and ability as musicians will please the fans. The romance is of the routine type, with misunderstandings and final reconciliation:—

Hugh Herbert is sent by the French Government to America to sign the American Ballet Company to appear in the dance competition that was to be held at the Paris Exposition. Upon his arrival in America, he takes a taxi and asks to be taken to the ballet company. The taxi driver, thinking that he wanted the Club Ballee, takes him there. Vallee and Allen Jenkins, owners of the club, who were on the verge of bankruptcy, are amazed at Herbert's offer. They know that he was mistaking them for the ballet company, but decide to take

their chances at being found out in the hope that they would win the prize. Vallee engages a ballet master and his one pupil (Miss Lane) to help train the girls. But the head of the American Ballet finds out about the trick; his sponsor (Ed Brophy), a gangster, leaves for Paris to shoot it out with Vallee; he takes the real company with him. In the meantime, Vallee and Miss Lane fall in love with each other. Once in Paris, the hoax is uncovered and Vallee and his troupe are thrown out of the hotel. Vallee's divorced wife, who had been the cause of a separation between the lovers, finally decides to help out. She forges records, thereby leading the police to deport Brophy and the real American Ballet Company instead of Vallee and his dancers. This gives Vallee his chance, and his dancers come through the winners. Vallee and Miss Lane are reconciled.

Jerry Wald, Richard Macaulay and Maurice Leo wrote the story from an idea by Jerry Horwin and James Seymour; Earl Baldwin and Warren Duff wrote the screen play, Ray Enright directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are Gloria Dickson, Melville Cooper, Mable Todd, Fritz Feld, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Three Comrades" with Robert Taylor, Franchot Tone, Margaret Sullavan and Robert Young**

(*MGM, June 3; time, 97½ min.*)

This tragic drama has powerful emotional appeal; but its theme is extremely depressing. Consequently, it will have to depend on the drawing power of the stars for its box-office appeal. There are situations that tear at one's heart; as a matter of fact, there is throughout an undertone of tragedy, futility, and hopelessness, putting one in an unhappy, restless frame of mind. One is in deep sympathy with the four leading players because of their courage and ideals; the way in which the friends stick together under all circumstances is inspiring. The outstanding performances are given by Margaret Sullavan and Franchot Tone, who act their parts with deep understanding. The background is post-war Germany. The picture has been produced expertly.

In the development of the plot, three friends (Taylor, Tone, and Young) return after the war to their homeland, Germany, only to find that restlessness, poverty, and lawlessness had taken the place of peace and sanity. They open a repair shop and manage to keep themselves fed and clothed. But their hopes rise when they meet Miss Sullavan, whom the war had stripped of wealth and family, for she seemed to give them a reason for living. She and Taylor fall in love; the two friends urge them to marry. She confides to Tone that she was suffering from a lung ailment, but he pleads with her to marry Taylor any way and snatch what happiness she could. She becomes desperately ill during the honeymoon. The friends sell their repair shop, and even their prized automobile in order to get money to send her to a sanitarium. Young, who had become connected with a political organization, is killed by a sniper. After a search, Tone finds the killer and shoots and kills him. Miss Sullavan, who had undergone a serious operation which required her to lie perfectly still, realizing that she would be a burden for the rest of her life, purposely gets up from the bed and walks; she later dies in her husband's arms. Tone and Taylor decide to go to South America to try their luck.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Erich Maria Remarque; F. Scott Fitzgerald and Edward E. Paramore wrote the screen play, Frank Borzage directed it, and Joseph L. Mankiewicz produced it. In the cast are Lionel Atwill, Guy Kibbee, Henry Hull, and others.

Morally suitable. Class A.



**"Kidnapped" with Warner Baxter,  
Freddie Bartholomew and  
Arleen Whelan**

(20th Century-Fox, May 27; time, 90 min.)

A fairly good melodrama, centering around the Scottish rebellion during the 18th Century. It may do very well at the box-office because of the name values of the stars and of the publicity Miss Whelan has been receiving. Although it lacks real tense excitement, owing to a rather choppy script, there is enough in it to please the average picture-goer—romance, adventure, and human appeal. One's attention is held mainly because of the sympathy one feels for Freddie, a lad with principles, who becomes innocently involved with the leader of the rebels and meets with many mishaps before he comes into possession of an inheritance rightfully due him. A few of the situations hold one in tense suspense. One such situation is where Freddie's conniving uncle tries to send the boy to his death. The romance is fairly appealing:—

Alan Breck (Warner Baxter), leader of the Scottish rebels who were fighting against the cruel tax system the English had imposed on them, is enraged when one of his men kills a tax collector. The only witness to the shooting was David Balfour (Freddie), who was on his way to his uncle's castle. Breck is, therefore, compelled to take David with him. David at first hates Breck, for he believed that the rebels were criminals, but association with Breck makes him change his mind. Breck insists that the man who had killed the tax collector must leave the country but, when the man insists that he would not leave without his fiancée Jean MacDonald (Miss Whelan), Breck promises to bring the girl to him at an appointed place. He and David travel with Jean and escape detection. David bids them goodbye, to go to his uncle's castle, promising not to talk. He is shocked at his uncle's attempt to kill him and learns, for the first time, that he was the rightful owner of the estates. His uncle plots with an unscrupulous Captain to shanghai David; the plan works. Again David meets Breck, who was travelling with Jean towards their destination. The Captain finds out who Breck was; but before he could do anything, Breck, Jean, and David escape. With the help of Breck, David comes into rightful possession of his estates. But Breck is caught. Through David's intervention, Breck's sentence is commuted from hanging to exile. But Breck is not too unhappy for he and Jean had fallen in love with each other and, since her fiancée had run away without her, had decided to marry.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Robert Louis Stevenson; Sonya Levien, Eleanor Harris, Ernest Pascal and Edwin Blum wrote the screen play; Alfred Werker directed it, and Kenneth Macgowan produced it. In the cast are C. Aubrey Smith, Reginald Owen, John Carradine, Nigel Bruce, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Blond Cheat" with Joan Fontaine  
and Derrick DeMarney**

(RKO, June 17; time, 61 min.)

This silly comedy won't mean much at the box-office. In addition to a weak story, the players, with the exception possibly of Joan Fontaine, are practically unknown to American audiences. The majority of the players are British and speak with a decided English accent; this gives one the feeling that the picture was produced in England instead of in Hollywood. The story lacks human appeal, for no one does anything to awaken sympathy. And the comedy is, for the most part, so forced that it fails to arouse laughter:—

Cecil Kellaway is eager to break up his daughter's (Lilian Bond's) romance with Derrick DeMarney, a clerk in his office, whom his wife (Cecil Cunningham) considered desirable because of good family back-

ground. By promising to put up the money for a show, Kellaway induces a producer and his star (Miss Fontaine) to enter into a scheme to compromise DeMarney. They do this by inducing DeMarney to give them a loan on earrings worn by Miss Fontaine. After the money had been turned over, they inform DeMarney that the earrings could not be removed and, therefore, he would have to keep Miss Fontaine under his care until the loan was repayed. This naturally complicates matters and brings about a break between DeMarney and Miss Bond. Eventually DeMarney learns about the scheme and is happy, for he had fallen in love with Miss Fontaine, who loved him; they are united.

Aladar Laszlo wrote the story, and Charles Kaufman, Paul Yawitz, Viola Brothers Shore and Harry Segall, the screen play; Joseph Santley directed it, and William Sistrom produced it. In the cast are Robert Coofe, Olaf Hytten, and others.

It is a little suggestive in spots; best suited for adults. Class B.

**"Holiday" with Katharine Hepburn,  
Cary Grant, Doris Nolan  
and Lew Ayres**

(Columbia, June 15; time, 94 min.)

Lavishly produced and capably acted and directed, this comedy-drama, which was first made by Pathe in 1930, with Ann Harding as the star, will direct its greatest appeal to class audiences. The story has been modernized by the addition of dialogue pertaining to present conditions; but somehow it lacks the vitality of its predecessor. Its one drawback, as far as the masses of today are concerned, is the fact that the story is developed entirely by dialogue; there is very little action. Yet, it is, in its way, good entertainment, for it has human appeal, comedy, and pathos; and it has been produced in the best of taste. One is in deep sympathy with the hero, the heroine, and the heroine's brother, three persons who suffer because of misunderstanding. The ending pleases one considerably:—

When Doris Nolan, daughter of a millionaire banker (Henry Kolker), introduces her family to Cary Grant, a young self-made man with whom she had fallen in love, she brings great happiness to her sister (Katharine Hepburn), who hated the stuffiness and formality of their existence. Both Miss Hepburn and her brother (Lew Ayres) were different from the usual type of rich children, in that they longed for independence and wanted to associate with real people. Everything goes smoothly until Grant makes his plans known; it was his intention to marry Miss Nolan and go with her on a spree as long as his money would last, for he wanted to enjoy life while he was still young; after that he would settle down to work. But Miss Nolan and her father both object to such an idea, for Kolker was all set to take him into his firm. In the meantime, Miss Hepburn, who had fallen deeply in love with Grant, pleads with her sister to do what Grant wanted; but her sister asks her to mind her own business. Grant is willing to compromise by going to work in the bank; but when Kolker again becomes insistent about plans for the honeymoon and about where the couple should live, Grant realizes she was not meant for such a life and breaks the engagement. He leaves to join his two dearest friends who were sailing that night for Europe. Miss Hepburn, realizing that her sister had never really loved Grant, bids her family goodbye and rushes after Grant; he is happy to see her.

The plot was adapted from the play by Philip Barry; Donald Ogden Stewart and Sidney Buchman wrote the screen play, George Cukor directed it, and Everett Riskin produced it. In the cast are Binnie Barnes, Edward Everett Horton, Jean Dixon, Henry Daniell, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



but in many different respects wherein, apart from the agreement, diverse action would inevitably have resulted, I find that the distributor defendants agreed and conspired among themselves to take uniform action upon the proposals made by Interstate and that they agreed and conspired with each other and with Interstate to impose the restrictions requested by Interstate upon all subsequent run exhibitors in Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. . . ."

Under, "The Effect of the Conspiracy":

"25. . . . The effect of the restrictions upon the low-income members of the community patronizing the theatres of these exhibitors was to withhold from them altogether the best entertainment furnished by the motion picture industry.

"26. . . . The attendance thus deflected from subsequent run theatres to Interstate's first run theatres [compelling the subsequent run exhibitors to charge 25¢ admission whereas Interstate charged 40¢] has reduced the income of the subsequent run exhibitors and there is no evidence that such loss in income has been offset by the higher scale in admission prices which, because of the restrictions, some of the subsequent run theatres have adopted. Since the license fees which the distributor defendants charge Interstate for exhibiting feature pictures in its first run theatres are generally based upon a percentage of Interstate's receipts from these pictures, the increased income which Interstate has received because of the restrictions has also increased the income of the distributor defendants."

"27. Defendant Hoblitzelle sought legal advice before he began crusading for the contracts. The attorney advised him that since distributors were copyright owners, they would have a right to enter into such stipulation with his company."

Under, "Conclusions of Law":

"2. All of the distributor defendants by acting pursuant to a common plan and understanding in imposing the restrictions as to minimum night adult admission price upon subsequent run exhibitors in the cities of Dallas, Houston, Fort Worth and San Antonio, for the season 1934-1935 and seasons subsequent thereto, suggested by Interstate, Hoblitzelle and O'Donnell, engaged in a combination and conspiracy in restraint of trade and commerce with Interstate, Hoblitzelle and O'Donnell, and with each other.

"3. (EDITOR'S NOTE: This paragraph deals with double features and finds all the defendants with the exception of Vitagraph, Inc., MGM, and MGM of Texas, as having entered into a combination and conspiracy in restraint of trade.)

"6. The restraint of interstate commerce affected by the united exercise by the distributor defendants of their individual monopolies respecting the exhibition of their copyrighted feature pictures is not within any privileges or immunities conferred by the copyright law.

"12. . . . Such undue and unreasonable restraint of interstate commerce is not within any privilege or immunity conferred upon the distributor defendants by the copyright law since the restraint was the product, not solely of the exercise of each defendant distributor's copyright privilege, but of a combination between it and Interstate fixing the terms upon which the distributor defendant would grant to competitors of Interstate license to exhibit certain feature pictures after Interstate's license privilege to exhibit these pictures had expired. . . ."

What is most interesting among Judge Atwell's "Conclusions of Law" is his remarks about the rights of the copyright owners of films. Read those remarks carefully.

HARRISON'S REPORTS regrets that, for lack of space, it cannot print the entire decision. But it will refer to it again in subsequent issues.

In the opinion of this paper, the best thing the producers can do is to have this decision printed with a view to sending a copy to every one of their salesmen and branch managers, with express instructions that they read it carefully and digest it; they will make their field representatives so careful that they will save themselves much trouble in the future.

## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 2 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"A Yank at Oxford," with Robert Taylor and Maureen O'Sullivan, produced by Michael Balcon and directed by

Jack Conway, from a screen play by Malcolm Stuart Boylan, Walter Ferris, and George Oppenheimer: Excellent-Good.

"Arsene Lupin Returns," with Melvyn Douglas, Virginia Bruce, and Warren William, produced by John W. Considine, Jr., and directed by George Fitzmaurice, from a screen play by James Kelvin McGuinness, Howard Emmett Rogers, and George Harmon Cox: Good-Fair.

"Merrily We Live," with Constance Bennett, Brian Aherne, and Billie Burke, produced by Milton H. Bren and directed by Norman Z. McLeod, from a screen play by Eddie Moran and Jack Levine: Very Good-Fair.

"The First Hundred Years," with Robert Montgomery, Virginia Bruce, and Warren William, produced by Norman Krasna and directed by Richard Thorpe, from a screen play by Melville Baker: Very Good-Poor.

"Girl of the Golden West," with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, produced by William Anthony McGuire and directed by Robert Z. Leonard, from a screen play by Isabel Dawn and Boyce DeGaw: Very Good-Fair.

"Judge Hardy's Children," with Lewis Stone, Mickey Rooney, and Cecilia Parker, directed by George B. Seitz, from a screen play by Kay Van Ripper: Very Good-Good.

"Test Pilot," with Clark Gable, Myrna Loy, and Spencer Tracy, produced by Louis D. Lighton and directed by Victor Fleming, from a screen play by Vincent Lawrence and Waldemar Young: Excellent.

Twenty-nine pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 9; Very Good-Fair, 2; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good, 6; Good-Fair, 8; Fair, 1.

The first 29 of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Excellent, 2; Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 4.

### RKO

"Maid's Night Out," with Joan Fontaine and Allan Lane, produced by Robert Sisk and directed by Ben Holmes, from a screen play by Bert Granet: Fair-Poor.

"Hawaii Calls," with Bobby Breen and Warren Hull, produced by Sol Lesser and directed by Edward F. Cline, from a screen play by Wanda Tuchock: Good-Poor.

"Condemned Women," with Sally Eilers, Louis Hayward and Anne Shirley, produced by Robert Sisk and directed by Lew Landers, from a screen play by Lionel Houser: Good-Poor.

"This Marriage Business," with Victor Moore, Allan Lane, and Vicki Lester, produced by Cliff Reid and directed by Christy Cabanne, from a screen play by Gladys Atwater and J. Robert Bren: Good-Poor.

"Joy of Living," with Irene Dunne and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., produced by Felix Young and directed by Tay Garnett, from a screen play by Gene Towne, Graham Baker and Allan Scott: Excellent-Good.

"Go Chase Yourself," with Joe Penner and Lucille Ball, produced by Robert Sisk and directed by Edward F. Cline, from a screen play by Paul Yawitz and Bert Granet: Good-Poor.

"Law of the Underworld," with Chester Morris, Anne Shirley, and Walter Abel, produced by Robert Sisk and directed by Lew Landers, from a screen play by Bert Granet and Edmund L. Hartman: Good-Poor.

"Gun Law," with George O'Brien, produced by Bert Gilroy and directed by David Howard, from a screen play by Oliver Drake: Good-Poor.

### 1936-37

"Bringing Up Baby," with Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant, produced by Cliff Reid and directed by Howard Hawks, from a screen play by Dudley Nichols and Hagar Wilde: Excellent-Fair.

Thirty-one pictures have already been released in the 1937-38 season. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season we get the following results:

Excellent-Good, 2; Good-Fair, 5; Good-Poor, 6; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 11; Poor, 2.

The first 31 of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 6; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 8; Poor, 4.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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No. 24

### NO FORMAL ACTION BY INTERSTATE COMMITTEE ON NEELY BILL

Having read in the papers a statement attributed to Hon. Clarence F. Lea, Chairman of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce to the effect that the Neely Bill has no further chance of being passed by the House at this session of Congress, I telegraphed to him on June 2 as follows:

"Newspapers carry a statement attributed to you that Neely Bill is dead for this session. This publication understood numerous members of Committee favored action on Bill. Please wire for publication whether your statement was based on formal action of Committee."

Having received no reply the following day, I telegraphed to him again, as follows:

"Important I receive reply to yesterday's telegram to you. Must know whether or not your statement to press yesterday was based on formal action of the Committee. Must send copy to compositor Monday latest."

The next morning I received the following reply:

"Committee has not yet taken any formal action on Neely Bill."

It is unfortunate that the Chairman of the Committee should have given to the newspapers such a statement without making it clear that it was not the result of any formal action on the part of the Committee, for a statement of this kind, made without any explanation, would no doubt have the tendency of causing the friends of the Bill to relax their efforts for its passage at this session.

Allied should immediately take steps to acquaint the organizations that are working for the passage of the Bill of the facts, as clarified to this paper by the Chairman.

### THE CASE OF RKO'S "BRINGING UP BABY"

I have been asked by exhibitors whether "Bringing Up Baby," the RKO picture with Katharine Hepburn in the leading role, is or is not a 1936-37 release.

According to the RKO national release schedule, "Bringing Up Baby" is a 1936-37 release; it has been earmarked by the number 739, and was released February 18. But whether holders of the 1936-37 RKO contracts are entitled to it, that is a matter that depends on certain conditions. Here are these conditions:

The RKO contract ran for 18 months from the day the first picture was play-dated in accordance with the terms of the contract, and covered such pictures as were "generally released" between September 1, 1936, and August 31, 1937.

The contract, however, specified that, if between September 1, 1936, and August 31, 1937 the distributor should not have "generally released" some of the pictures that were to be designated by RKO as 1936-37 productions, the contract holder had, nevertheless, to accept such pictures if they should be released not later than December 31, 1937, unless such contract holder notified RKO, in writing, not later than September 10, 1937, that he did not want such pictures.

Since "Bringing Up Baby" was not released prior to December 31, 1937, it is not a picture that belongs to the holders of 1936-37 season's contracts, in spite of the fact that RKO has earmarked it as a 1936-37 release. If an exhibitor, then, wants it, he must sign a new contract for it. On the other hand, RKO cannot compel an exhibitor holding such a contract to accept it as a 1936-37 release.

The limitations of the contract were explained in the interpretation of the 1936-37 season's RKO contract, which

appeared in the August 19, 1936, issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS.

Similar limitations, or provisions, are contained in the 1937-38 season's contract, and will, no doubt, be included in the 1938-39 season's.

### AN INJUSTICE CERTAIN EXHIBITORS COMMIT TOWARD THIS PAPER

From time to time I circularize the exhibitors of the United States and Canada with a view to getting new subscribers.

Each circular brings in a number of them.

Last week I sent such a circular and one of the exhibitors made on the letterhead the following amazing notation:

"Dear Mr. Harrison:

"Because I have access to another exhibitor's copies of your REPORTS, it isn't necessary for me to subscribe. Let me assure you that your paper is read weekly from cover to cover, and I like it."

For several years I have been hearing rumors that many exhibitors fail to subscribe to HARRISON'S REPORTS by reason of the fact that they read it at some other exhibitor's office, but this is the first time that I have had an out-and-out admission, under an exhibitor's own signature.

To those who read HARRISON'S REPORTS and benefit from the information contained in each weekly issue, let me say this: Have you ever realized that, to obtain information from HARRISON'S REPORTS without paying for it, is just like going to the baker, taking a loaf of bread, and going away without paying for it?

I shall give you another illustration: How would you feel if somebody engaged you to work for him for a week and at the end of the week refused to pay you the wages due you?

My case is not different: HARRISON'S REPORTS is not like the other trade papers, which depend for their livelihood on advertising; it contains my labor. And when you benefit from my labor without paying for it you are doing me an injustice.

I believe those of you who have been resorting to such a practice did not see the matter the way I am presenting it to you now, and that, when you read these lines, as you undoubtedly will, you will send in a check by return mail.

### THE FORECASTER NOW FUNCTIONING

The first six issues of the 1938-39 season's *Forecaster* have been printed and mailed to all subscribers of this special service. They contained complete forecasts of the following products: Columbia, Twentieth Century-Fox, Monogram, and the Warner-First National product, in two sections; also the first of four sections of the MGM product.

The remaining available stories for the MGM product will be mailed this week, and the forecasts for the product of other companies will be prepared as soon as the stories are available.

If you contemplate subscribing to this service, you should do so at once, so that you may receive copies of all the issues that have already been printed, and the remainder of the issues as they come off the press.

As stated in these columns recently, the accuracy of the 1937-38 season's forecasts proved more than 88% accurate. Such an accuracy is, indeed, invaluable to an exhibitor, in that he is enabled to talk to the film salesman from facts, instead of having to accept the salesman's statements as to the quality of the story material his company has announced for production.

(Continued on last page)



### **"The Marines are Here" with June Travis and Gordon Oliver**

(*Monogram, June 8; time, 60 min.*)

Fair program entertainment, suitable as a second feature. The story is routine; it depends on the customary squabbling between two marines about their prowess as lovers and as soldiers for its comedy. Action fans may enjoy the encounters between the marines and bandits, but even these lack the excitement one expects. The plot development is obvious; one knows from the beginning just how the story will progress and end. There is no fault to find with the individual performances:—

Gordon Oliver and Ray Walker, two marines, spend most of their time in the brig because of their inability to stay out of trouble. They sober up a bit when, during an encounter with Chinese bandits, their sergeant is killed. To Oliver falls the distasteful task of breaking the news to the sergeant's son (Ronnie Cosbey), who had arrived in Manila with his aunt (June Travis) to greet his father. Oliver and Miss Travis fall in love with each other. But a misunderstanding arises when she learns that he had been telling his pals that it was only his duty that prompted him to call on her; she does not understand that he had done this in order to keep the other men away from her. Oliver's company is sent to quell another bandit uprising; this time Oliver and Walker distinguish themselves by their bravery in capturing the bandit leader. Both men are promoted. Although wounded, Oliver does not complain for it brings about a reconciliation between him and Miss Travis.

Edwin Parsons and Charles Logue wrote the story, and Jack Knapp and J. Benton Cheney, the screen play; Phil Rosen directed it. In the cast are Big Boy Williams, Billy Dooley, and others.

Morally suitable. Suitability, Class A.

### **"Three on a Week-End" with Margaret Lockwood, John Lodge and Hugh Williams**

(*Gaumont-British, June 1; time, 72 min.*)

This comedy-drama should please mostly high class audiences because of expert acting and novelty of setting. But it is doubtful if the masses will find it to their liking, first, because of its typically British flavor, and, secondly, because the plot is somewhat disconnected. Although the main theme is tragic, the story is so interspersed with comedy that it never becomes depressing; as a matter of fact, its best feature is the comedy. The scenes at the seaside resort, where the average English workers rush for a holiday, are realistic and extremely comical:—

Margaret Lockwood, nurse at a maternity hospital, is heartbroken when a young woman dies giving birth to her first child. Her heart goes out to the young husband (John Lodge), who had loved his wife dearly. But she tries to forget the case by going off for a week-end with her sweetheart (Hugh Williams). She finds, however, that she could not relax, because her thoughts wandered back to London; she feared that Lodge would take his life. She leaves a note telling Williams that their jaunt had been a mistake and that she had gone back to London. Having left her purse in her room, she accepts a lift from a man travelling alone and thereby becomes involved in a robbery. But the man clears her. She rushes to Lodge's apartment and arrives

there with a policeman just in time to save Lodge, who had tried to take his life by inhaling gas. Williams is comforted by a young girl who, too, had been thrown over by her sweetheart; he soon forgets all about Miss Lockwood. Lodge is thankful for Miss Lockwood's sympathy.

Hans Wilhalm and Rodney Ackland wrote the story, and Carol Reed directed it. In the cast are Rene Ray, Linden Travers, Merle Tottenham, and others.

Because of the implication that the heroine and the hero were intending to spend the week-end together, it is hardly suitable for adolescents; class B.

### **"Blockade" with Madeleine Carroll and Henry Fonda**

(*United Artists, June 17; time, 83 min.*)

This melodrama, centering around war-torn Spain, is strong fare. It presents its subject, that of the plight of the poor Spanish peasants, presumably the Loyalists, powerfully; but it is too depressing, too heart-rending to be classified as entertainment. It may arouse the spectators, but it will leave them restless and unhappy, and, in the face of conditions today, it seems that such a picture is not what the masses want. Enough is said in newspapers and shown in newsreels to enlighten those who are interested in what is going on in Spain, so that when people go to a motion picture theatre to relax, they are again brought face to face with realities and world problems. The romance is in the end left hanging in the air.

In the development of the plot, Henry Fonda and his pal (Leo Carrillo), Spanish peasants, love their simple life, the land they own, and the freedom to live as they pleased. Their dreams are shattered with the outbreak of the war in Spain. Fonda pleads with his neighbors not to desert their land but to fight for the right to keep it. In line with his duties, Fonda is forced to kill a spy (Vladimir Sokoloff), father of Madeleine Carroll, with whom he had fallen in love. Being penniless and unable to get out of the country, Miss Carroll, against her better instincts, is compelled to carry on the spy work against the people under the supervision of John Halliday. The last piece of work she does for him is to deliver a message to the enemies about the sailing of a relief ship that was destined for a town that had been shut off by a blockade of submarines. Horrified at the sight of starving people, death, and destruction, she regrets her actions and tries to atone by misinforming her people; she is compelled to kill Halliday when he tries to telephone instructions to the air base. But Fonda had fooled the enemies by planting a decoy, which the submarines sink, thereby permitting the relief ship to pass through the blockade safely. Miss Carroll assists Fonda's superiors by pointing out the traitors. The Commander offers Fonda a leave of absence to marry Miss Carroll and snatch some happiness; but Fonda refuses, exclaiming bitterly that there could be no peace when innocent women and children were being starved and killed for no good reason.

John Howard Lawson wrote the original screen play; William Dieterle directed it, and Walter Wanger produced it. In the cast are Reginald Denny, Robert Warwick, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Class B.



**"Josette" with Simone Simon, Don Ameche and Robert Young**

(20th Century-Fox, June 3; time, 73 min.)

Light but pleasant entertainment. Although it lacks novelty in plot construction, it manages to keep one amused throughout by its infectious gaiety, pleasant romantic situations, and musical interludes. Simone Simon sings two numbers well; her voice has improved considerably since her last picture, but she still has a pretty thick accent. Joan Davis is of considerable help in provoking laughter. The background is New Orleans:—

Don Ameche and Robert Young, learning that their father (William Collier, Sr.) had become enmeshed in another love affair, this time with a Parisian singer, decide to get him out of the way while they talk things over with the singer (Tala Birell). They send him off to New York, on a supposed business matter, and then hasten to the cafe to see Miss Birell. What they did not know was that Miss Birell had left for New York to marry Collier. Miss Simon, hat-check girl at the cafe, who was eager to become a singer, takes Miss Birell's place; Bert Lahr, the cafe owner, realizing his reputation would be ruined if the deception were found out, insists that Miss Simon continue using the missing singer's name. Young is considerably charmed by Miss Simon, and insists on talking with her. Ameche finds himself falling in love with Miss Simon, despite his contempt for her supposed gold-digging ways. In the meantime, Collier returns to New Orleans a sobered man; having told Miss Birell that his sons owned the business, she had left him and returned to the cafe. Ameche, still under the impression that Miss Simon was the other girl, insults her by sending her fur coats. But he finds out about his mistake and is repentant. Miss Simon finally succumbs and admits her love for him.

Paul Frank and Georg Fraser wrote the play, and Ladislaus Vadnai, the story; James E. Grant wrote the screen play; Allan Dwan directed it, and Gene Markey produced it. In the cast are Paul Hurst, Lynn Bari, and others.

Some of the dialogue and situations are a bit suggestive; suitability, therefore, Class B.

**"Wives Under Suspicion" with Warren William and Gail Patrick**

(Universal, June 3; time, 68 min.)

This is a remake of "Kiss Before the Mirror," produced by Universal in 1933. But as in the first version, it is only fair entertainment; as a matter of fact this is even less forceful. A few changes have been made in the plot, but the story is slightly artificial, and the actions of the hero are not such as to put him in a favorable light; he is shown as being hard-boiled and cruel, taking delight in sending criminals to the electric chair. One sympathizes somewhat with the heroine, but her part is more or less a negative one. The situation in which the hero is on the verge of killing his wife, whom he had wrongly suspected of being unfaithful, holds one in suspense:—

Warren William, District Attorney, traps Ralph Morgan into making a full confession as to why he had murdered his wife. In his confession he had stated that he had noticed his wife taking particular care about her clothes and appearance; also that while she was sitting in front of her mirror, he had tried to kiss her but she had shuddered.

Having become suspicious, he had followed her to her lover's apartment; there he had killed her. William scoffs at the idea of a man killing the woman he loved. But one night he becomes suspicious of his own wife, the circumstances being similar to Morgan's case. He follows her and sees her going to a man's apartment; he is on the verge of killing her but something holds him back. The next day in court he makes an impassioned plea on behalf of Morgan, saying that he had misjudged him. When his wife prepares to leave him he pleads with her to remain. He later finds out that his suspicions had been unfounded, and that her visit to the man had been to patch up a quarrel he had had with his sweetheart. William is thankful that he had spared his wife's life. He promises to change his ways.

Ladislas Fodor wrote the story, and Myles Conolly, the screen play; James Whale directed it and Edmund Grainger produced it. In the cast are William Lundigan, Constance Moore, Cecil Cunningham, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"You and Me" with George Raft and Sylvia Sidney**

(Paramount, June 10; time, 93 min.)

This is a ridiculous hodge-podge; starting out as a gangster melodrama, it winds up as an artistic flop. Fritz Lang, the producer-director, who probably realized that the story given him was pretty trite, tried to cover up its defects with artistic touches of symbolism. The scene in which the ex-convicts meet and chant their old prison tunes, with a flashback showing them in the prison, is so fantastic and stupid, that it should make audiences laugh; many people won't even know what it is all about. And the situation in which the heroine, by giving the prisoners facts and figures written out on a blackboard, tries to convince them that crime doesn't pay, smacks of preachment and bores one. There are a few good spots that are highlighted by comedy.

George Raft, an ex-convict, is determined to go straight. He works in the department store owned by Harry Carey, a humanitarian, who believed in giving ex-convicts a chance. In addition to Raft, he had other former jail inmates working in the store. Barton MacLane, a racketeer, fails to induce Raft to go back into the racket. Raft falls in love with Sylvia Sidney, a co-worker, and tell her of his past. She marries him, but does not tell him that she, too, was an ex-convict. When he finds this out, he leaves her in disgust, and plans to work with MacLane and the old gang in robbing the store. But Miss Sidney finds out about this and arranges with Carey to confront the crooks when they appeared. Thinking Miss Sidney was acting as a stool pigeon, Raft is disgusted. But she gives the boys a lecture, showing them that crime does not pay; they are all ashamed of themselves. She then disappears. Raft is heartbroken when he learns that she was going to have a baby. After a few months search, he finds her in the maternity ward of a hospital; they are happily reconciled.

Norman Krasna wrote the story, and Virginia VanUpp, the screen play. In the cast are Roscoe Karns, George E. Stone, Warren Hymer, and others.

Not for children. Class B.



The cost of the forecaster has been made flexible, so that the big exhibitor may pay a little more than the small exhibitor, because the benefit he receives from this service is greater.

Subscription blanks have already been mailed to every exhibitor. If you have not received a copy, write and ask for one.

### WARNER-FIRST NATIONAL HOLD-OVERS

Among the works that Warner-First National has announced for production in the 1938-39 season are, "Boy Meets Girl," the well known stage play; "The Sister Act," the Fannie Hurst story; "The Valley of the Giants," the Peter B. Kyne story; "Yes, My Darling Daughter," the stage play by Mark Reed; "The Sisters," the best seller by Myron Brinig; "The Desert Song," the Oscar Hammerstein and Sigmund Romberg operetta (to be produced in technicolor), and the Warden Lewis E. Lawes short-lived stage play, "Chalked Out."

Because these works were announced also in the 1937-38 season, I have been asked by some exhibitors to define their rights to these pictures.

Every pamphlet put out by Warner-First National for exhibitor circulation in the 1937-38 season contained the following notice: "The information supplied herein is intended only as an indication of material which may be produced, and of individuals who may appear in motion pictures, and is not a representation made by distributor to induce any exhibitor to enter into a contract."

Aside from this safeguard, which lawyers say releases Warner-First National from the obligation of delivering to the exhibitors what they used on them as a "catch," Warner-First National is absolved by the following provision in Clause Eighth of the contract:

"(a) The Distributor shall have and hereby reserves the right in the sole discretion of the Distributor to change the title of any of the said motion pictures, to make changes in, alterations and adaptations of any story, book or play and to substitute for any thereof any other story, book or play. . . ."

On the strength of this provision, Warner-First National has the right to deliver a picture based on any story it sees fit to use instead of the particular story it promised to the contract holders.

This may not be morally right, but it is not legally wrong. It is one of those abuses Allied States has been fighting against; it is what has made it work for the Neely Bill, for under this Bill, no distributor could resort to so unethical a practice.

I have no sympathy for any exhibitor who complains against this abuse but aids the producers in their efforts to kill the Neely Bill's chances of becoming a law. There is no other way by which this sort of unfairness could be stopped except by a law such as the Neely Bill.

If you want the producers to deliver to you what they promise, wire your Congressman requesting him to see to it that the Neely Bill reaches the voting stage at this session. The exhibitor leaders believe that it will pass the House if it should be put to a vote.

### BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 3

#### Paramount

"Big Broadcast of 1938," with W. C. Fields, Martha Raye, and Dorothy Lamour, produced by Harlan Thompson and directed by Mitchell Leisen, from a screen play by Walter De Leon, Francis Martin, and Ken England: Good-Poor.

"Cassidy of Bar 20," with William Boyd and Nora Lane, produced by Harry Sherman and directed by Lesley Selander, from a screen play by Norman Houston: Good-Fair.

"Romance in the Dark," with Gladys Swarthout, John Boles, and John Barrymore, produced by Harlan Thompson and directed by H. C. Potter, from a screen play by Frank Partos and Anne M. Chapin: Fair-Poor.

"Dangerous to Know," with Akim Tamiroff, Gail Patrick, Lloyd Nolan and Anna May Wong, produced by Edward T. Lowe and directed by Robert Florey, from a screen play by William R. Lipman and Horace McCoy: Good-Poor.

"Bulldog Drummond's Peril," with John Barrymore, John Howard, and Louise Campbell, directed by James Hogan, from a screen play by Stuart Palmer: Good-Poor.

"Bluebeard's Eighth Wife," with Claudette Colbert and Gary Cooper, produced and directed by Ernst Lubitsch, from a screen play by Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder: Very Good-Good.

"Tip Off Girls," with Lloyd Nolan and Mary Carlisle, directed by Louis King, from a screen play by Maxwell Shane, Robert Yost, and Stuart Anthony: Good-Fair.

"Her Jungle Love," with Dorothy Lamour, Ray Milland, and Lynne Overman, produced by George M. Arthur and directed by George Archainbaud, from a screen play by Joseph Moncure March, Lillie Hayward and Eddie Welch: Good-Fair.

"Heart of Arizona," with William Boyd, George Hayes, and Russell Hayden, produced by Harry Sherman and directed by Lesley Selander, from a screen play by Norman Houston: Good-Fair.

"College Swing," with Martha Raye, George Burns, and Gracie Allen, directed by Raoul Walsh, from a screen play by Walter DeLeon and Francis Martin: Good-Poor.

"Doctor Rhythm," with Bing Crosby and Mary Carlisle, produced by Emanuel Cohen and directed by Frank Tuttle, from a screen play by Jo Swerling and Richard Connell: Very Good-Fair (mostly good).

"Stolen Heaven," with Olympe Bradna, Gene Raymond, and Lewis Stone, directed by Andrew Stone, from a screen play by Eave Greene and Frederick Jackson: Good-Poor.

Forty-four pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Very Good-Fair, 2; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 9; Good-Poor, 6; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 6; Poor, 3.

The first 44 of the 1936-37 season, excluding Westerns, were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 4; Good, 7; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 13; Poor, 3.

#### United Artists

"Adventures of Tom Sawyer," with Tommy Kelly, Ann Gillis, and May Robson, produced by David O. Selznick, and directed by Norman Taurog, from a screen play by John Weaver: Excellent-Good.

"Storm in a Teacup," with Vivien Leigh, Rex Harrison, and Sara Allgood, produced by Alexander Korda and directed by Ian Dalrymple and Victor Saville, from a screen play by Ian Dalrymple: Fair-Poor.

"The Gaiety Girls," with Jack Hulbert and Patricia Ellis, produced by Gunther Stapenhorst and directed by Thornton Freeland, from a screen play by Arthur Macrae: Fair-Poor.

"Adventures of Marco Polo," with Gary Cooper, Basil Rathbone, and Sigrid Gurie, produced by George Haight in association with Samuel Goldwyn and directed by Archie Mayo, from a screen play by Robert E. Sherwood: Excellent-Fair.

"Divorce of Lady X," with Merle Oberon, Binnie Barnes, and Laurence Olivier, produced by Alexander Korda and directed by Tim Whelan, from a screen play by Lajos Biro and Robert E. Sherwood: Good-Fair.

"The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel," with Barry Barnes and Sophie Stewart, produced by Alexander Korda and directed by Hans Schwartz, from a screen play by Lajos Biro, Arthur Wimperis, and Adrian Brunel: Fair-Poor.

Twenty-one pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 4; Excellent-Good, 2; Excellent-Fair, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 1.

Only 20 pictures were released during the 1936-37 season; they were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good, 6; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 3; Poor, 1.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

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No. 25

### HOPES—NOT REALITIES

Says Barney Balaban, president of Paramount:

"Business in the distribution and theatre department of Paramount is off as compared with last year and reflected in the recent financial report. But we should do very much better starting August when the seasonal upturn will be noted.

"Major companies will be releasing more big pictures then and the season will be in full swing. You remember the 1932 depression when everyone looked forward to a turn in the fall which did not come? Well, I don't think this will be the case in August."

On what does Mr. Balaban base his optimism? On mere hope and belief. He admits that there was similar hopes and beliefs in 1932, but they did not materialize. But this time he says it will be different, but he does not tell us why; he merely thinks so.

His optimism can be explained easily—he has film to sell for the 1938-39 season.

### TWO IMPORTANT RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE ALLIED CONVENTION

One of the resolutions that was passed at the Allied convention in Pittsburgh recommended to the exhibitors everywhere in the United States to demand an adjustment of the prices in their 1937-38 season's contracts. And the reason of it is sound; since the producers have cut down their production budgets on account of the diminution in the box office receipts of the theatres, and necessarily of the film exchanges, the quality of the pictures has fallen down correspondingly. Thus the exhibitors have been hit, not only by the depression, but also by the inferior quality of the pictures that are now delivered to them and have been delivered to them for several months.

The question of adjustments has now passed the stage where the exhibitors should make a request; the theatre receipts have been hit so hard that it now becomes necessary for the producers to come forward to offer such adjustments, not out of kind-heartedness but out of common sense: theatres must remain open; but unless the producers come forward with adjustments hundreds of them will be compelled to shut down their doors, many of them permanently. And where is the profit for them if they were to refuse to grant adjustments and then see many of these theatres close their doors? The need for adjustments has not been created artificially; when a theatre such as Balaban & Katz's Oriental, in Chicago, which could get any kind of films it wanted, closes its doors because of the steady decline of business, it is altogether unnecessary for any one to attempt to impress the producers with the seriousness of the smaller exhibitor's condition. The case of the shutting down of the Rivoli, on Broadway, this city, too, can be cited.

Another Allied resolution that needs to be brought to the attention of the exhibitors is the following; it explains itself:

"Whereas, there exists in this industry a practice perpetrated by every distributor in every exchange center

in the United States, whereby drives or campaigns are conducted for the prepayment of film rentals far in advance of the play dates thereof, and the dating of features and short subjects far beyond the needs of the individual exhibitor, and

"Whereas, this practice, instigated many years ago and tolerated by exhibitors, now has been enlarged and intensified into amazing proportions, so as to become not only a strain on the finances of the exhibitor but also causes serious disruption of booking schedules carefully planned and thought out, and

"Whereas, this practice serves merely to increase the ego of, or publicize the name of, or flatter the vanity of some highly or overpaid executives of the various distributors, it is generally perpetrated under the guise of affording a means of the booker to be given a cash bonus or well earned vacation, and

"Whereas, this practice is not only of no real benefit to the exhibitor but puts him in the embarrassing position of antagonizing a man who may, because of shortage of prints, whether real or artificial, do him irreparable harm, in disregarding contractual availability; now, therefore, be it

"RESOLVED, that this practice be condemned."

While HARRISON'S REPORTS does not approve the language it has been written in, it approves the recommendation.

### PRODUCTION OF AMERICAN PICTURES IN ENGLAND

"Hollywood," says *The Hollywood Reporter* of June 1, "will lose several productions to London this coming year, due to the increased stringency of the British quota law. The new law, which not only regulates a percentage of the pictures for each company releasing in England but sets a minimum production cost on them, will prove a boom to English production and, under present indications, will mean the transferring of some pictures slated to be made here to London for production there. . . ."

Increasing the number of British-made pictures that are sold to the exhibitors in the United States cannot help creating an additional problem for the American exhibitors, for the English pictures do not, as a rule, draw, frequently even when the quality is good. Only if the American producers send their stars there for taking the leads can the problem be less acute.

In an article printed in the New Year number of the *Kine*, of London, I told the British producers that their pictures do not draw patrons in the United States by reason of the fact that their stars are not known well, and pointed out ways by which, not only their stars, but also many artists supporting these stars could become known to the picture-going public in this country. But the British producers have so far taken no steps to popularize their stars here. Until they take such steps, you naturally must be careful in buying your pictures for the 1938-39 season. Make sure that the product you buy does not contain pictures from abroad, unless you knowingly buy them. Insert into the contract a provision to the effect that pictures produced outside the United States will not be delivered among the pictures contracted for.



**"Ladies in Distress" with Alison Skipworth,  
Polly Moran and Robert Livingston**

(*Republic*, July 11; time, 65½ min.)

This comedy-melodrama is good program fare. There is plentiful action, brought about by the hero's efforts to help the woman Mayor of a small town clean out a gang of racketeers. And for comedy, Polly Moran's antics at times provoke hearty laughter. The faith the Mayor has in the hero and his eventual regeneration under her influence is the basis for the picture's human appeal. The fact that at one time he goes back on his promise and accepts bribe money from the racketeers, is unpleasant; but he makes up for this in the end. The romance is pleasant:—

When Alison Skipworth, small-town Mayor, realizes that she could not contend with the racketeers who had settled in her town and who were fleecing the business men by forcing them to join their protective association, and taking money from the inhabitants with crooked gambling machines, she decides to call in outside help. Having followed the career of Robert Livingston, the town's bad boy, who had developed into a big time gambler, she feels he was the man she needed. So she goes to New York, where she innocently becomes involved in a gambling raid; but Livingston comes to her aid, and agrees to go back with her. He gets good results and finds out that the town's most respected lawyer (Berton Churchill) was at the head of the gang. Livingston, after breaking up the racketeering association and closing the gambling establishments, comes to the conclusion that money could be made easily without using force; and so he joins forces with the racketeers, accepting \$25,000 for his advice. But when the gangsters find out who he really was, they order him to leave town; otherwise, they would embarrass the Mayor. Livingston agrees to go on condition that they keep his identity a secret. But no sooner does he leave than they pass the information on to a newspaper; this puts the Mayor, who was ill, in a bad position. But Livingston returns, clears the Mayor, and exposes Churchill, who had hopes of becoming the new Mayor. Livingston decides to settle down and marry the Mayor's niece.

The story idea was suggested by Dore Schary. Dorrell and Stuart McGowan wrote the screen play, Gus Meins directed it, and Harry Grey produced it. In the cast are Virginia Grey, Max Terhune, Leonard Penn, and others.

The racketeering makes it unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"White Banners" with Fay Bainter,  
Claude Rains and Jackie Cooper**

(*Warner Bros.*, June 25; time, 91 min.)

A sentimental, heart-warming drama; it should go over well with the masses because of its simple but effective approach to matters the average spectator understands. It is primarily the story of a noble woman, who, by her philosophy and intelligence, influences those with whom she comes in contact. One is in deep sympathy with her; the final scenes, in which she goes away so as not to ruin the life of her son, who did not know she was his mother, are certain to bring tears to one's eyes. Although it lacks fast action and romance, it is always interesting; in addition, it has the benefit of excellent performances:—

Claude Rains, college professor, loves his wife (Kay Johnson) and their two children; but he is harrassed by unpaid bills and his inability to make any progress with his inventions. To their home one day comes Fay Bainter, selling kitchen gadgets. Since it was snowing out and she looked tired, Miss Johnson asks her in. Appreciative of Miss Johnson's kindness, Miss Bainter asks for permission to cook the dinner. She does everything so efficiently that she becomes a permanent fixture in the house. Things change for the better. She inspires Rains to invent an iceless ice-box and induces

him to take as his assistant Jackie Cooper, incorrigible son of the wealthiest man in town. Jackie becomes a new boy. Together the two work on the refrigerator; but before they could do anything their invention is stolen by an unscrupulous mechanic who had, through an oversight on Cooper's part, seen the work; Rains loses all hope. And to add to his troubles his daughter contracts pneumonia, from which she recovers. Miss Bainter induces him not to sue the crooks; and she pleads with him to drop his grudge against Cooper and to listen to new plans the boy had. They set to work to invent another type of refrigerator. Cooper's father brings in a financier to look the invention over; the man turns out to be Miss Bainter's erstwhile lover. She is compelled to tell Rains about her past and the fact that Cooper was her son. But she convinces the financier not to tell Cooper anything, since it might disillusion him. She then decides that the best thing for her to do would be to leave the town, for if she remained she might be tempted to tell Cooper she was his mother.

Lloyd C. Douglas wrote the novel from which this was adapted; Lenore Coffee, Cameron Rogers, and Abem Finkel wrote the screen play, Edmund Goulding directed it, and Henry Blanke produced it. In the cast are Bonita Granville, Henry O'Neil, Kay Johnson, James Stephenson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Toy Wife" with Luise Rainer,  
Melvyn Douglas, Robert Young,  
and Barbara O'Neil**

(*MGM*, June 10; time, 95 min.)

This tragic drama has been given a lavish production; and the performances are excellent. But its appeal will be directed mainly to women, for it is too labored and slow-moving for male audiences. The first half is draggy, since most of the interesting action is concentrated in the second half. There are a few scenes that touch one's emotions deeply. The situation where Luise Rainer accuses her sister of having stolen the love of her husband and her child is powerful. Miss Rainer gives color to the part of the flighty young wife, but it is not a sympathetic part. Actually, it is not until the end that one is touched by her plight, and then all that one feels for her is pity. The background is Louisiana during pre-civil war days:—

H. B. Warner, plantation owner, arrives home from Europe with his two daughters, Miss Rainer and Barbara O'Neil; they had been studying abroad. Miss Rainer was carefree and happy, with only one thought in her mind, to marry and thus be able to go out and have a good time, while Miss O'Neil was sensible, fine, and practical. Miss O'Neil is madly in love with Melvyn Douglas, brilliant young prospector; she feels certain that he loved her. But to her surprise, he confesses to her his love for Miss Rainer. She is not the only unhappy person; the marriage brings sorrow to Robert Young, young playboy, who had fallen madly in love with Miss Rainer. After four years of marriage, during which time a son had been born to her, Miss Rainer is gloriously happy but still irresponsible. Douglas, although still infatuated with her, suffers because of her inefficiency. He is happy when Miss O'Neil arrives to live with them, for then everything runs smoothly. When Miss O'Neil turns down an attractive marriage proposal from a Count, Miss Rainer becomes aware of the truth—that her sister loved her husband. After a bitter quarrel with Miss O'Neil, Miss Rainer runs away with Young, who still idolized her. But it all ends in tragedy, for when they return to Louisiana, Douglas challenges Young to a duel and kills him; and Miss Rainer contracts tuberculosis and dies. But before her death, she had known a few moments of joy, for her husband had taken her back into his home and she had seen her child.

Zoe Akins wrote the screen play, Richard Thorpe directed it, and Merian C. Cooper produced it. In the cast are Alma Kruger, Libby Taylor, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



**"Mr. Moto Takes a Chance" with  
Peter Lorre, Rochelle Hudson  
and Robert Kent**

(20th Century-Fox, June 24; time, 63 min.)

This latest in the Moto series is good juvenile fare; but adults will not be able to take it seriously for the story is wild and over-melodramatic. But, as said, the juveniles will have a good time; they probably will not pay attention to the plot defects for the action is exciting enough to hold them in suspense throughout. A romance is dragged into the plot, but it is of slight importance:—

Robert Kent and Chick Chandler, two newsreel photographers, who were taking pictures of animal life in the jungle, come upon what they considered a scoop—the burning of the plane piloted by Rochelle Hudson, a famous aviatrix on a round-the-world flight; Miss Hudson escapes by means of a parachute. She is escorted to the palace of the Rajah (J. Edward Bromberg); the newsreel men follow her there. The Rajah permits them to take pictures, despite the protests of his high priest (George Regas). Just then his favorite wife drops to the ground, dead. The cameramen are made prisoners. Peter Lorre, an archeologist, investigates and finds that she had been killed by a dart. Later, posing as an old religious recluse, he is instrumental in saving the lives of Kent and Chandler. Lorre discovers an arsenal in the basement of the temple. It develops that he was a French secret service agent, whose mission was to find where the ammunition was stored, and who was at the head of the revolt. And it turns out that Miss Hudson, too, was an agent sent on the same mission. In a fight, Regas, who was at the head of the revolt, and his men are overpowered and the Rajah's kingdom saved. Lorre, Kent, Chandler, and Miss Hudson manage to escape. Kent and Miss Hudson turn their thoughts to marriage.

Willis Cooper and Norman Foster wrote the story, and Lou Breslow and John Patrick, the screen play; Norman Foster directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Fredrik Vogeding, and others.

It will do for the children. Class A.

**"Border G Man" with George O'Brien**

(RKO, June 24; time, 60 min.)

A very good western. Although the plot is of a familiar pattern, it has been developed with so much exciting gun play, fist fights, and fast riding, that it holds the spectator in tense suspense throughout. The production values, both in settings and photography, are superior to most westerns; and the performances are uniformly good. Throughout there is plentiful action; but for real thrills, the closing scenes offer those. A pleasant romance has been worked into the story:—

George O'Brien, a G-Man, sent by Washington to investigate the activities of a gang that was smuggling horses and ammunition to foreign countries, enlists the aid of one of the ranchers, who had been unwilling to sell horses to the smugglers. O'Brien poses as the rancher's new foreman; he wins his way into the good graces of John Miljan, gang chief, by showing a willingness to trade with him and even joins Miljan's gang. In the meantime, he meets and falls in love with Laraine Johnson, whose brother had innocently become involved with the gang; this had been brought about by Rita LaRoy, Miljan's assistant, who had led the young man on by pretending to be in love with him. At first, Miss Johnson is suspicious of O'Brien, but she soon finds out she had been mistaken. O'Brien eventually uncovers the whole smuggling plot, obtains the evidence he needed to convict Miljan, and arrests Miljan and the members of his gang. He and Miss Johnson are united.

Bernard McConville wrote the story, and Oliver Drake, the screen play; David Howard directed it, and Bert Gilroy produced it. In the cast are Ray Whitley, Edgar Dearing, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Highway Patrol" with Jacqueline Wells  
and Robert Paige**

(Columbia, June 27; time, 57 min.)

Despite the routine plot, action fans should get a great "kick" out of this program melodrama. It starts off with plentiful action and continues at a fast pace, holding one in suspense throughout; the closing scenes are particularly thrilling. The title is slightly misleading, for all the action is concentrated at an oil refinery, and not on the highway. The usual romance is worked into the plot; but it is unimportant:—

Robert Middlemass is determined to fight his competitors, who warned him that, if he should lower the price of gasoline, they would ruin him. With the help of two of his employees, who were working on their side, the competitors try to cripple the refinery, but they are unsuccessful. Middlemass, realizing his danger, engages Robert Paige, a highway patrolman on vacation, to guard the refinery. Paige finds out that the head policeman at the refinery was mixed in with the gang; this man dies in the trap he had set for Paige. Middlemass' daughter (Jacqueline Wells) is annoyed at Paige's treatment of her, particularly when he refuses her admission to the plant. She sneaks into one of the company trucks, and starts driving it through the gate, without realizing that it had been loaded with dynamite by the enemy, for the purpose of crashing it into the plant thereby causing an explosion. Paige saves her, and the truck crashes into a wall and explodes without doing any damage. Eventually Paige proves that Arthur Loft, the manager, was the inside man working for the enemies. With Loft's confession, Middlemass is able to prosecute his competitors. Paige and Miss Wells marry.

Lambert Hillyer wrote the story, and Robert E. Kent and Stuart Anthony, the screen play; C. C. Coleman, Jr., directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Alan Bridge, Eddie Foster, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"When Were You Born?" with Anna  
May Wong, Margaret Lindsay  
and Lola Lane**

(First National, June 18; time, 65 min.)

Just a fair program murder mystery melodrama. Action has been supplanted by long discourses on the merits of applying the science of astrology in solving murders; the over-abundance of dialogue becomes pretty tiresome. In the end, the producers resort to the old tricks of sliding panels and strange disappearances of some of the characters; but it is too late to revive one's interest in the picture. At best, the plot is routine; it will need good exploitation to bring in the customers:—

While on board ship, James Stephenson, an art dealer, becomes insulting when Anna May Wong, a student of astrology, tells him that the stars indicated that he would be killed; he scoffs at her belief in the stars. But his fiancée (Lola Lane) takes it a little more seriously, for she had been amazed at Miss Wong's accurate analysis of her own character and traits, and believed in her. Stephenson is murdered the very first night he lands in San Francisco. Having heard about Miss Wong's prediction, the police arrest her as a suspicious character; but she convinces the inspector that she could help him solve the murder, by means of astrology. Her first request when each suspect is brought in is to ask the date of his or her birth; with this information at hand she is able to dismiss those who definitely showed no signs, according to the stars, of being a murderer. Another man is killed during the investigation. Finally, the murderer, who, it develops, had been Stephenson's valet, is trapped.

Manley P. Hall wrote the story, and Anthony Coldeway, the screen play; William McGann directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Anthony Averill, Charles Wilson, Eric Stanley, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 4

### Twentieth Century-Fox

"The Baroness and the Butler," with William Powell and Annabella, produced by Raymond Griffith and directed by Walter Lang, from a screen play by Sam Hellman, Lamar Trotti, and Kathryn Scola: Good-Fair.

"Love on a Budget," with Jed Prouty, Spring Byington, and Shirley Deane, produced by Max Golden and directed by Herbert Leeds, from a screen play by Robert Ellis and Helen Logan: Good-Fair.

"Sally, Irene and Mary," with Alice Faye, Tony Martin, Joan Davis, and Marjorie Weaver, produced by Gene Markey and directed by William A. Seiter, from a screen play by Harry Tugend and Jack Yellen: Good-Fair (mostly good).

"Walking Down Broadway," with Claire Trevor, Phyllis Brooks and Michael Whalen, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel and directed by Norman Foster, from a screen play by Robert Chapin and Karen De Wolf: Good-Poor.

"Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," with Shirley Temple, Gloria Stuart, and Randolph Scott, produced by Raymond Griffith and directed by Allan Dwan, from a screen play by Karl Tunberg and Don Ettlinger: Very Good-Good.

"Mr. Moto's Gamble," with Peter Lorre, Keye Luke and Lynn Bari, produced by John Stone and directed by James Tinling, from a screen play by Charles Belden and Jerry Cady: Good-Fair.

"Island in the Sky," with Gloria Stuart, Michael Whalen, and Paul Kelly, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel and directed by Herbert I. Leeds, from a screen play by Francis Hyland and Albert Ray: Good-Fair (mostly fair).

"Rawhide," with Lou Gehrig, Smith Ballew, and Evalyn Knapp, produced by Sol Lesser and directed by Ray Taylor, from a screen play by Dan Jarrett and Jack Natteford: Good-Poor.

"In Old Chicago," with Alice Faye, Tyrone Power, Don Ameche, and Alice Brady, produced by Kenneth Macgowan and directed by Henry King, from a screen play by Lamar Trotti and Sonya Levien: Excellent.

"Battle of Broadway," with Victor McLaglen, Brian Donlevy and Louise Hovick, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel and directed by George Marshall, from a screen play by Lou Breslow and John Patrick: Very Good-Poor.

"Four Men and a Prayer," with Loretta Young, Richard Greene, David Niven, George Sanders, and William Henry, produced by Kenneth Macgowan and directed by John Ford, from a screen play by Richard Sherman, Sonya Levien and Walter Ferris: Good-Fair.

"A Trip to Paris," with Jed Prouty, Spring Byington, and Shirley Deane, produced by Max Golden and directed by Mal St. Clair, from a screen play by Robert Ellis and Helen Logan: Good-Fair.

Forty-four pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 2; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 5; Very Good-Fair, 2; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good-Fair, 16; Good-Poor, 5; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 2; Poor, 1.

The first 44 of the 1936-37 season, excluding Westerns and "As You Like It," were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 3; Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 5; Good, 10; Good-Fair, 6; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 6.

### Universal

"Forbidden Valley," with Noah Beery, Jr., and Frances Robinson, produced by Henry MacRae and directed by Wyndham Gittens, from a screen play by Wyndham Gittens: Fair-Poor.

"Border Wolves," with Bob Baker and Connie Moore, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by Joseph H. Lewis, from a screen play by Norton S. Parker: Fair-Poor.

"Mad About Music," with Deanna Durbin, Herbert Marshall, Gail Patrick, and Arthur Treacher, produced by Joseph Pasternak and directed by Norman Taurog, from a screen play by Bruce Manning and Felix Jackson: Excellent-Good (mostly excellent).

"Crime of Dr. Hallett," with Ralph Bellamy, Josephine Hutchinson, and William Gargan, produced by Edmund

Grainger and directed by Sylvan Simon, from a screen play by Lester Cole and Brown Holmes: Good-Fair.

"State Police," with John King, Constance Moore, and William Lundigan, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by John Rawlins, from a screen play by George Waggner: Fair-Poor.

"Let's Make a Night of It," with Buddy Rogers and June Clyde, produced by Walter C. Mycroft and directed by Graham Cutts, from a screen play by Hugh Brooke: Fair-Poor.

"Goodbye Broadway," with Alice Brady and Charles Winninger, produced by Edmund Grainger and directed by Ray McCarey, from a screen play by Roy Chanslor and A. Dorian Otvos: Good-Poor.

"Reckless Living," with Robert Wilcox and Nan Grey, directed by Frank McDonald, from a screen play by Charles Grayson: Fair-Poor.

"The Last Stand," with Bob Baker and Connie Moore, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by Joseph H. Lewis, from a screen play by Harry D. Hoyt and Norton S. Parker: Fair-Poor.

"Nurse from Brooklyn," with Sally Eilers and Paul Kelly, produced by Edmund Grainger and directed by S. Sylvan Simon, from a screen play by Roy Chanslor: Good-Fair (mostly fair).

"Lady in the Morgue," with Patricia Ellis, Preston Foster, and Frank Jenks, produced by Irving Starr and directed by Otis Garrett, from a screen play by Eric Taylor and Robertson White: Fair.

"Sinners in Paradise," with John Boles and Madge Evans, produced by Ken Goldsmith and directed by James Whale, from a screen play by Harold Buckley, Louis Stevens, and Lester Cole: Fair-Poor.

"Air Devils," with Larry Blake and Craig Reynolds, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by John Rawlins, from a screen play by Harold Buckley and George Waggner: Fair.

Thirty-eight pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 5; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 12; Fair-Poor, 16; Poor, 1.

Only thirty-three pictures, excluding Westerns, were released during the 1936-37 season; they were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 13; Fair-Poor, 12.

### Warner Bros.

"Love, Honor and Behave," with Wayne Morris and Priscilla Lane, produced by Lou Edelman and directed by Stanley Logan, from a screen play by Clements Ripley, Michel Jacoby, Robert Buckner, and Lawrence Kimble: Good-Poor.

"He Couldn't Say No," with Frank McHugh and Jane Wyman, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by Lou Seiler, from a screen play by Joseph Shrank, Robertson White, and Ben Grauman Cohn: Fair-Poor.

"Jezebel," with Bette Davis, Henry Fonda, and George Brent, produced by Henry Blanke and directed by William Wyler, from a screen play by Clements Ripley, Abem Finkel, and John Huston: Very Good-Good.

"Over the Wall," with Dick Foran and June Travis, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by Frank McDonald, from a screen play by Crane Wilbur and George Bricker: Good-Poor.

"Accidents Will Happen," with Ronald Reagan and Gloria Blondell, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by William Clemens, from a screen play by George Bricker, Anthony Coldeway and Morton Grant: Good-Poor.

Nineteen pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Good-Fair, 5; Good-Poor, 4; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 5.

The first 19 of the 1936-37 season, excluding Westerns, were rated as follows:

Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 2.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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No. 26

### THE FATE OF THE NEELY BILL IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Congress has adjourned without a vote on the Neely Bill in the House of Representatives. This means that the Neely Bill has failed of enactment, and that, if you want it to become a law, you will have to start all over again.

When one considers the fierce lobbying the producers did in Washington against the Bill one must realize what a miracle was the action of the Senate. Not only every possible wire was pulled, but also every misrepresentation made as to what effect the Bill would have upon the industry.

The statement issued on June 13 by Mr. Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States Association, under the heading, "Neely Bill Smothered," is extremely illuminating, and worth bringing to the attention of every friend of the Bill. Here it is:

"Before the general counsel could return to Washington for a final check-up, the Chairman of the House Committee on Interstate Commerce called a meeting of his committee at which a bare quorum was present, and succeeded in his efforts to have the Neely Bill tabled, by a vote of 9 to 6.

"This was the culmination of a course of action pursued by Chairman Lea throughout the session, aimed at preventing the passage of this bill. He prevailed upon the House sponsor, Congressman Pettengill, not to press the bill in committee until it was seen whether the Senate would act upon the identical Neely Bill. When, to Lea's chagrin, the Senate passed the Neely Bill, he apparently let it be known (at least so the newspapers reported) that he would keep the bill in his pocket until adjournment. When the supporters of the bill began to press committee members for action, no committee meetings were called. Then on Saturday morning, at the tag end of the session, and with the right members present, Lea permitted the bill to be considered.

"After all this maneuvering, there was not a majority against the bill. Practically all those voting to table it explained that they did so because it was 'too late to pass the bill anyway' or because they 'did not know enough about it.' Information regarding the performance of individual members of the Committee will be communicated to the exhibitors in their respective districts in due time.

"What makes the opposition of Lea all the more sordid is the fact that he has been the recipient of and has openly accepted favors from the members of the Big Eight. Only a few weeks ago Warner Bros. placed 'Robin Hood' at his disposal so that he could stage a big party to his own honor and glory before the picture was released to the theatres in Washington.

#### "PUBLIC GROUPS SOLIDIFIED

"This year's campaign for the Neely Bill has demonstrated the great strength generated through the alliance of Allied and the many public groups supporting the measure. The motion picture trust lobby concentrated its efforts on Lea and certain of his committee members because they knew that, if the bill reached the floor of the House, it would pass as easily as it did in the Senate. The knowledge gained during this campaign as to the methods employed by the trust lobby has made the public groups all the more determined to press the fight to a successful conclusion.

"Most important of all, leaders of certain of those groups now are convinced that more is involved in this fight than the abolition of a trade practice. They realize that behind block booking and other oppressive practices lurks a vicious monopoly which, lacking self-restraint, must be curbed. It is probable that many of these groups will now enlarge

the scope of their interest in the movie situation to include a movement for the suppression of the trust. This will involve efforts to secure prosecution under the anti-trust laws as well as support for legislation providing for rigid Federal control of the movie industry.

#### "VICTORY IS NOW ASSURED

"The postponement of the Neely Bill by manipulations preventing a consideration thereof by the House on its merits is at most only a temporary reverse. Actually, the methods by which it was accomplished has strengthened the exhibitors' position. The passage of the bill by the Senate, the record made up in the trial of the North Dakota case, the enlarged interest of the public groups in the movie situation, the forthcoming investigations regarding the concentration of power in American industry and the effects thereof on the decline of competition, the possibility that executive and administrative agencies may awake to their responsibilities under existing law—all of these considerations make it clear that victory for the Allied program for freedom and fair play for the independent exhibitors is assured."

Whatever the fate of the Neely Bill, one thing has been demonstrated—that the exhibitors can succeed, if working in unison, to have remedial legislation introduced and even passed in Congress. And this has had a salutary effect upon the producers, for these are now talking about getting together with the independent exhibitors in a sincere effort to have the most flagrant abuses removed.

The next few weeks are going to demonstrate how sincere the producers are in their efforts to come to an understanding with the independent exhibitors. If they are going to drag in the exhibitor organization that they have been supporting with their money with a view to using it as a "blind," they will demonstrate conclusively that the leopard has not changed his spots—that it is the same old leopard; if they drop the pretenses and come forward with real concessions, one of such concessions being to withdraw from exhibition in small towns, then the exhibitors will have been convinced that there is a real hope for an understanding.

Knowing the temper of the Allied leaders as I do, I may give a warning to the producers that, unless they come forward with a real conciliatory spirit, expressing their readiness to make substantial sacrifices for the good of the entire industry, the Allied legislative program, not only will not be dropped, but will be intensified. And the Senate vote on the Neely Bill ought to be indicative as to what can possibly be accomplished. It will avail them nothing to use shysterism in an effort to outmanoeuvre the exhibitor leaders during the negotiations, for these will not again suffer to be outmanoeuvred.

### THE FATE OF THE NORTH DAKOTA THEATRE DIVORCEMENT LAW

In his June 13 statement, Mr. Abram F. Myers made the following comment on the North Dakota Theatre Divorcement Law, which Paramount took to the Federal courts:

"The trial of the suit brought by Paramount to set aside this law as unconstitutional was held in Fargo, North Dakota, from June 1 to June 11. Paramount contended, in substance, that the law (1) was unconstitutional on its face and (2) was unconstitutional because there was no factual justification for it. On the latter point, much evidence was taken by both sides as to whether there is or is not a movie trust. The suit was in the form of an action to enjoin the Governor, Attorney General and State's Attorneys of North Dakota from enforcing the law. The defense was conducted

(Continued on last page)



### **"Having Wonderful Time" with Ginger Rogers and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.**

(RKO, July 1; time, 70 min.)

A fairly good romantic comedy. In transferring it from the stage play, much of the charm and meaning of the story was substituted for comedy, which is not exceptional. It will have to depend for its box-office success on the drawing power of the stars. Ginger Rogers' performance is superior to the material given her; she is an effective and appealing heroine, winning one's sympathy by her unaffected charm; but aside from her, most of the other characters are so silly that their actions bore one. The whole thing is a broad burlesque of what takes place at summer camps; as such it will be understood and appreciated more by young folk who frequent summer camps than by adults:—

Miss Rogers, a stenographer, looks forward with joy to her two weeks' vacation at a summer camp. After taking hectic leave of her family, she finally arrives at the camp; but her first feeling is that of disappointment. She is annoyed at the flip manner of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., an unemployed waiter working at the camp for the summer as a waiter; also at the crudeness of some of the guests. But she and Fairbanks get to know each other better and soon are deeply in love. When he suggests that, because the outlook for his future looked dismal, they live together, Miss Rogers is insulted. She purposely accepts the attentions of another guest (Lee Bowman) and, when he invites her to his bungalow, she goes there with him. She lets him understand immediately that she was a nice girl and would not permit love-making; instead, she induces him to play backgammon with her. He soon gets tired and goes to bed; but Miss Rogers, knowing that Fairbanks was waiting for her, stays on at the bungalow until she falls asleep. She does not awaken until the following morning and is compelled to sneak out. But Bowman's jealous girl friend (Lucille Ball) sees her leave and suspects the worst; she confronts Bowman in the dining room and demands to know why Miss Rogers spent the night with him. He naturally does not know what she was talking about for he had no idea that Miss Rogers had stayed on after he went to bed. But Fairbanks does not lose faith in Miss Rogers; they are reconciled when he suggests that they get married.

Arthur Kober wrote the screen play from his own stage play; Alfred Santell directed it, and Pandro S. Berman produced it. In the cast are Eve Arden, Dorothea Kent, Richard Skelton, Donald Meek, and others.

Children will not understand the sex insinuations. Class A.

### **"Cowboy from Brooklyn" with Dick Powell, Pat O'Brien and Priscilla Lane**

(Warner-First Natl., Rel date not set; time, 76 min.)

This burlesqued Western, with music, is fairly good entertainment. The first half is somewhat slow; but it picks up speed in the second half, ending in an extremely comical manner. The tuneful songs are put over well by Dick Powell and Priscilla Lane. Incidentally, Miss Lane makes a good impression for, in addition to acting with ease, she has charm and exuberance. Powell suffers a bit in the part assigned to him, for during most of the picture he is compelled to act like a nincompoop. The romance is routine:—

Powell and two other musicians, while hitch-hiking to Hollywood, stop off at a dude ranch to ask for food. Miss Lane, the owner's daughter, is attracted to Powell and offers to take him on as a musician in return for his board; Powell has trepidations about taking the job for he was in mortal fear of animals, even of a harmless chicken. But Miss Lane promises to keep the animals away from him. To the ranch comes Pat O'Brien, a fast-talking, high-pressure theatrical agent; no sooner does he hear Powell sing than he rushes him to New York. Believing Powell to be a real cowboy, O'Brien sends out press notices about his wonderful western singer. Powell makes a hit over the radio. Everything runs smoothly until Dick Foran, a jealous cowboy, informs the press that Powell was a fake; Powell then admits to O'Brien that he hailed from Brooklyn. The motion picture executive who had been ready to sign Powell for pictures refuses to enter into negotiations until Powell could prove that he was a real cowboy. Powell finally gains courage through hypnotism, enters the rodeo, and wins the prize by riding the wildest steer. He gets the contract and Miss Lane as his bride.

The plot was adapted from the play "Howdy Stranger," by Robert Sloane and Louis Pelletier, Jr.; Earl

Baldwin wrote the screen play, Lloyd Bacon directed it, and Lou Edelman produced it. In the cast are Ann Sheridan, Johnnie Davis, Ronald Reagan, Emma Dunn, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Romance of the Limberlost" with Jean Parker and Eric Linden**

(Monogram, June 22; time, 81 min.)

A homespun drama, with human appeal; it should go over well with the family trade, but large down-town theatres may find the action too slow for their type of patronage. The performances are good, in particular that of Marjorie Main's, in the part of the embittered aunt, who bullies and mistreats the heroine. There are several situations that bring tears to the eyes; the most touching scene is that in which the heroine pleads with her aunt not to force her to marry a brutal farmer, whose one virtue was that he had money. Those who have read and enjoyed the Gene Stratton-Porter novels will likewise enjoy this picture, for it is in keeping with her style:—

Laurie (Jean Parker), a child of nature, is a happy and gentle person; the only thing that made her unhappy was the treatment she received at the hands of her embittered Aunt Nora (Marjorie Main), with whom she lived in the Limberlost swamps. Laurie meets Wayne (Eric Linden), a young lawyer, whose father was the village judge; they fall in love with each other. But Nora had other ideas for Laurie; she had promised Corson (Ed Pawley), a wealthy brutal farmer despised by all, to let him marry Laurie in return for the cancellation of the mortgage he held on her house and additional cash. She forces Laurie into agreeing by threatening to tell the villagers scandalous stories about her mother, who had died. Chris (Hollis Jewell), Corson's bound boy, tries to prevent the marriage by threatening Corson; Corson pulls the rifle out of the boy's hands and drops it. It accidentally goes off and kills him. Chris is arrested; but Wayne, who had decided to defend him due to Laurie's pleas, wins his release. Every one is happy. Nora tearfully admits her wrong-doing and her love for her niece; a reconciliation follows. Laurie and Wayne are united.

Marion Orth wrote the screen play and William Nigh directed it. In the cast are Betty Blythe, George Cleveland, Sarah Padden, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Men Are Such Fools" with Wayne Morris, Priscilla Lane, Hugh Herbert and Humphrey Bogart**

(Warner Bros., July 9; time, 68 min.)

Just mildly entertaining. It is a rehash of the old theme of career versus marriage, with little novelty in plot development. As a matter of fact, the overabundance of dialogue, in lieu of action, becomes so tiresome that the spectator is bored before the picture is half over. The few spots that provoke laughter are those in which Hugh Herbert appears; his antics are familiar but nevertheless comical. A good cast is more or less wasted on a story that lacks novelty or excitement:—

Priscilla Lane, secretary to Herbert, advertising executive, had good ideas for advertising copy; she looks forward to the day when she would have an executive position. But Wayne Morris, her fiance, is more interested in getting her to marry him than in her having a career. She manages to attract the attention of the heads of the organization, and, in a short time, advances to a position of importance. She marries Morris, and soon decides to leave her job to devote her time to being a real wife. But she is annoyed when Morris turns down a good opportunity for a partnership because he felt that, being married, he should not take chances. She leaves him, and goes back to her old job. To spite her, Morris goes in for big business and advances rapidly to a position of importance; but he refuses to talk to her. Miss Lane still loves him; but, knowing that Humphrey Bogart, the chief of her firm, loved her, and feeling that Morris no longer cared, she decides to get a divorce and marry Bogart. She changes her mind at the last minute, however, when Morris proves that he had never stopped loving her; they are reconciled.

Faith Baldwin wrote the story, and Norman Reilly Raine and Horace Jackson, the screen play; Busby Berkeley directed it, and David Lewis produced it. In the cast are Penny Singleton, Marcia Ralston, Gene Lockhart, Mona Barrie, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### "Prison Farm" with Shirley Ross, Lloyd Nolan and John Howard

(Paramount, June 17; time, 69 min.)

A lurid but exciting prison melodrama, capably directed and acted; it holds one's attention throughout. It is a little too strong for the family trade; but adult audiences that go in for pictures of this type should find it very much to their liking. The fact that the heroine, although innocent, is sent to the prison farm and is forced to do menial labor touches the spectator; for that reason, one is in deep sympathy with her throughout. The scenes showing the treatment the prisoners, both men and women, receive at the hands of the guards are pretty rough. Men will be thrilled by the fist fight, in the closing scenes, between one of the prisoners and a vicious guard:—

Despite the warning of her one sincere friend (Esther Dale), Shirley Ross is determined to marry Lloyd Nolan, who was shiftless and conceited. She is thrilled when he informs her that he had obtained a very good position in Canada and that they would have to leave that very night and be married on the way. What she does not know is that he had held up an armored truck, killed the guard, and escaped with \$9,000. She asks him to go to the station, promising to follow in her car in a few hours. While on the road she runs short of gasoline and accepts a lift from J. Carrol Naish, a prison-farm guard. When they arrive at the station, Naish tries to get intimate with her and she slaps him; Nolan rushes to her side and knocks Naish down. He arrests them; they are tried and sentenced to six months at the prison farm. Nolan does not worry for he had sewed the money into the lining of his coat, which was safely put away until the end of his term. Miss Ross breaks under the strain of the hard work; she is helped along by John Howard, the prison doctor, who takes an interest in her. At her one meeting with Nolan, she realizes, from something he said, that he had committed a crime; she sends for Miss Dale, and from her learns the truth. Nolan, in the meantime, strikes a bargain with Naish; he offers to give him \$500 to help him escape. Naish follows him to the storeroom and, when he sees the money, demands it all. In a fight that follows, Naish shoots Nolan. Just before he dies, Nolan clears Miss Ross and causes Naish's arrest. Freed, Miss Ross marries Howard, who leaves the prison.

The story idea was by Edwin V. Westrate; Eddie Welch, Robert Yost and Stuart Anthony wrote the screen play, Louis King directed it; in the cast are Porter Hall, Margorie Main, May Boley, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

### "The Rage of Paris" with Danielle Darrieux and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.

(Universal, July 1; time, 77 min.)

An excellent comedy, lavishly produced; it has general appeal. The light story serves as a framework for sparkling dialogue, amusing situations, and a delightful romance. Most important though is the introduction of Danielle Darrieux, Universal's new star, to American audiences; they should be captivated by her beauty, charm, and ability. And surprising enough her French accent adds to her charm instead of annoying one. There are several extremely comical situations; some are slightly risqué, but so cleverly are they handled that they never become offensive. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. gives his best performance to date; he makes the hero a likeable and pleasing person:—

When Miss Darrieux is told that, if she wanted to be a model, she would have to pose with just a drape around her, she turns down the position. After another girl is engaged, she changes her mind and takes from the executive's desk a slip of paper with a name and address on it, thinking it was the position first intended for her. She is admitted to Fairbanks' office and, not seeing him there, starts to undress. When he enters he is surprised and, thinking she was in some racket, orders her out. Discouraged, she seeks the help of her one friend (Helen Broderick). Miss Broderick, in turn, takes her to see her old friend (Mischa Auer), head waiter at a hotel. Auer had saved \$3,000 with which to open his own restaurant. But Miss Broderick talks him into investing the money in Miss Darrieux by buying her beautiful clothes and setting her up in an expensive

suite at the hotel, with Miss Broderick posing as her aunt. Their idea was that Miss Darrieux would get a rich husband and then repay Auer lavishly. And sure enough the plan works, for she becomes acquainted with wealthy Louis Hayward, who falls madly in love with her. But it develops that Fairbanks was a friend of Hayward's and when he sees Miss Darrieux, tries to put a stop to the match. At first Hayward does not believe him, but he later gets proof convincing him of Miss Darrieux's scheming. Auer promises Hayward that if he would reimburse him for the money he had spent, he would send Miss Darrieux back to Paris. Fairbanks, realizing that he loved her, books passage on the same boat. After a hasty apology for having doubted her, he confesses his love and they plan to marry.

Bruce Manning and Felix Jackson wrote the story and screen play, Henry Koster directed it, and B. G. DeSylva produced it. In the cast are Charles Coleman, Harry Davenport, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING ON THE SCREENS

According to *The Motion Picture Daily*, beer advertising, put out by Alexander Film Co., and shown on theatre screens by means of trailers, has created so much resentment among picture patrons, that many theatres have been compelled to discontinue showing the trailers.

*The Motion Picture Daily* states that, according to J. Don Alexander, president of the advertising concern, these trailers will be offered to theatres in localities where the patrons do not object to this sort of advertising.

National advertising on theatre screens is bad enough, by reason of the fact that the theatres, by contracting for such advertising, encroach upon the field of the newspapers, upon which the theatres depend so much for the public's good will, but when the subject advertised is beer, the matter becomes worse, for the theatre owners cannot be unaware of the fact that there are millions of people in the United States who are "bone" drys.

The question of advertising on the screen of nationally known products was, as many of you remember well, fought in 1931 very bitterly. At that time, Paramount and Warner Bros. went into it extensively, putting out, not trailers, but whole short subjects, wound around some product, such as Texaco Oil and the like. This paper realized at that time that, if sponsored screen advertising had become established, motion picture exhibition would have been almost ruined, by reason of the fact that the public would resent the imposition and, having no other way of expressing its disapproval except by staying away, millions of them would stay away from picture theatres.

The first thing that HARRISON'S REPORTS did was to enlist the aid of the daily press of the nation. And the daily press came to its support almost unanimously. Many prominent newspapers wrote scathing editorials against the practice. HARRISON'S REPORTS copied not only extracts from these editorials, but also letters sent to it by newspaper editors and publishers. As a result, Paramount and Warner Bros. were in a short time compelled to cancel their contracts with the advertisers, and those of the other major companies that were ready to enter into advertising contracts themselves, gave up the idea. A complete victory had been won.

Whenever a theatre shows on its screen national advertising, the newspaper people become informed of the fact, either by personal observation or through confidential bulletins published by their association. As a result, they withhold from such theatres free advertising. Consequently the theatre suffers a far greater loss than it would suffer from the loss of revenue if it were to discontinue the practice.

The theatres should be careful also about accepting advertisements from local merchants, for although the newspaper people do not offer strenuous objections to this type of advertising, it is, nevertheless, an encroachment upon the advertising field of the newspapers, and the newspaper people cannot help resenting it.

But even if you were to disregard the objections of the newspaper people, you certainly cannot disregard the objections of the picture-going public. And this public has demonstrated repeatedly that it does not like to pay an admission fee to be imposed upon by commercial advertising.



by the general counsel of Allied and counsel for the Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest, who had been designated special assistants to the Attorney General of North Dakota for this purpose.

"The case was argued on June 11 and both parties submitted proposed findings for the consideration of the court. The case was taken under advisement by the three Federal Judges (Sanborn and Thomas, C. J. and Sullivan, D. J.) and a decision is expected at an early date. If the court passes on the law in the light of the facts disclosed at the trial, the law should be upheld. If the court treats the case as involving merely a naked question of law, anything may happen.

"A powerful record was built up showing conclusively that there is a movie trust. Messrs. Steffes, Richey, Cole, Maertz, Ashe, Young and Koppelberger, of Allied, gave valuable testimony. The testimony of V. U. Young, of Gary, Indiana, was especially impressive. But by far the most valuable testimony, from the standpoint of the exhibitors, was that given by Messrs. Freeman and Keough, of Paramount, Mr. Rodgers of Metro and Mrs. Dietz of the Film Board of Trade, all witnesses for Paramount. So accustomed are these men to exercising arbitrary power and so convinced are they of their God-given right to do so, that they testified so freely regarding their domination of the industry as to cause the exhibitors and their counsel to blink with astonishment.

"The facts disclosed already have been summarized in the proposed findings prepared by the general counsel. After the case has been decided a more detailed statement of the proof will be prepared for the use of Allied regional associations for use in connection with the Allied campaign of legislation and litigation."

According to a report made by a special correspondent of this paper, the highlights of the testimony were: testimony by—

(1) Messrs. Steffes, Richey, Cole, Maertz, and Ashe, as to theatre grabbing by Paramount affiliates in Minnesota, Michigan, Texas, Wisconsin and North Dakota;

(2) Mr. W. A. (Al) Steffes, as to the struggle of the independent theatre owners through their associations, over a period of many years, to induce the distributors to cease grabbing theatres, and as to the unfair tactics employed by the producers and affiliated chains against the independents;

(3) Mr. H. M. Richey, as to public relations—about organizations of religious as well as of educational groups interested in motion picture programs and policies; the need for the exhibitors to be free agents so that they might be enabled to cooperate with the consumer groups more effectively;

(4) Col. H. A. Cole, dealing with the whole range of organization, policies and practices of the motion picture industry, particularly about the Frels-Interstate Circuit case. His testimony, which was strengthened greatly by the meandering and purposeless cross-examination by Judge Thacher, has proved to be a veritable encyclopedia of information on the motion picture business.

(5) Mr. V. U. Young, of Gary, Indiana, as to the methods that were employed by the Balaban & Katz circuit to take away from him the Paramount product and the product of other distributors. Mr. Friedl, president of Minnesota Amusement Co., had testified that the producers sell their pictures to whichever theatre is the largest and best situated, because of the fact that they derive greater financial returns from such a theatre, and that affiliation with Paramount does not influence the negotiations in the least. But Mr. Young was able to disprove such assertions decidedly, by pointing out the fact that his theatre had 2,400 seats, whereas the Balaban & Katz theatre had only 1200 seats; that his theatre was located on the main street, whereas the Balaban & Katz theatre was on a side street; and that his theatre could produce for the distributor more revenue than the Balaban & Katz house, but that, despite all these advantages, he had lost the pictures.

Mr. Young testified also that, with regard to the RKO pictures, he was permitted to negotiate for them only after the buyer for the Balaban & Katz circuit had called him up on the telephone from New York and had informed him that he could have that product.

(6) Mr. W. F. Rodgers, general sales manager of MGM. The following is what this paper's correspondent writes about Mr. Rodgers' testimony:

"After testifying that Metro did not favor affiliated theatres as against independent theatre owners, he could cite only 32 small situations where Metro split its product between an affiliated theatre (usually Warner-owned), and an independent, and only 20 'tiny' situations where he sold an independent as against an affiliated theatre. These 52 cases combined are an infinitesimal fraction of the total number of 9,800 Metro accounts, out of which 1700 are affiliated theatres. His case was weakened considerably more when, during cross-examination, Mr. Myers asked him, after Mr. Rodgers had told the court how he sold pictures to the heads of the Loew circuit, who was the boss of Loew's circuit. Upon his answer, 'Mr. Schenck,' Mr. Myers asked Rodgers as to who was the boss of Messrs. Vogel and Meyer, heads of the theatre department, and he had to say that it was Mr. Schenck. Mr. Myers then asked him whether, in case of disagreement as to the prices he asked and the prices Messrs. Vogel and Meyer would offer, the decision would not be made by Mr. Schenck. And Mr. Rodgers had, of course, to admit that it would be Mr. Schenck. Mr. Rodgers admitted under cross-examination also that Loew's theatres had an understanding, in the nature of a franchise, that they will get the product; also that he had the power, any time he wanted to exercise it, of cutting his product off the 52 independents he had cited."

(7) Mr. Y. Frank Freeman, as to the panic Lynch and he had been thrown into by the formation of First National, both being compelled to rush to New York to urge Adolph Zukor to acquire theatres. He stated that he and Lynch had a franchise from Paramount to sell Paramount pictures in the South, and that he feared lest the formation of an exhibitor cooperative group such as First National, going into distribution, would ruin their business. This testimony was apparently offered as a justification for Paramount's going into exhibition. On cross-examination by Judge Devaney, counsel for Allied of the Northwest, he admitted that First National had been acquired by Warner Bros., and that Richards, one of the organizers of First National, is now vice-president of Paramount. This correspondent says:

"The startling thing about this testimony is that neither Freeman nor Judge Thacher recognized the fact that the entry of exhibitors into distribution was no worse than the entry of distributors into exhibition. Consequently, when Freeman was describing the probable monopoly of First National and the fear he felt as a result of such a monopoly, he did not realize that he was describing the monopoly Paramount and the other major distributors now have."

(8) Mr. Austin Keogh, relative to the fact that it was he who had directed the Paramount sales department to take film away from Frels, because Frels had contributed to a defense fund raised to help Legge, an exhibitor, who had brought suit against Paramount and other distributors; also to the fact that Paramount maintained strict supervision over its theatre "partners," and that no independent territory may be invaded without consultation with the home office. This naturally makes Paramount responsible for acts of affiliated companies in which it has 50% or even less of the stock.

(9) Mrs. Mabel Dietz, former secretary of the Minneapolis Film Board of Trade, as to the fact that protection and clearance were discussed at meetings of the Board, thus bringing the Minneapolis territory under principle in the Youngclaus case. The correspondent concludes as follows:

"Mr. Myers urged that, if a dog is entitled to one bite, the octopus was presumably entitled to one grand squeeze, and that the record of the motion picture industry's octopus had been written in numerous court decisions, such as the compulsory arbitration case, the credit committees case, the Youngclaus, the Perelman, and many other cases, long before North Dakota had enacted the law in question. Consequently, the State of North Dakota was entitled to act with a view to curbing its predatory activities. He then confined himself to the facts brought out during the trial, arguing that, because of the power and temptation, inherent in the operation of theatres by distributors, the divorce law was neither arbitrary nor unjust, and that it was warranted by the facts."

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## SOME OF THE OTHER ABUSES THAT NEED ELIMINATION

In last week's issue a suggestion was made that the producers should make up their minds to eliminate some of the most flagrant abuses before any get-together with the exhibitors can have any permanent effect.

One of the outstanding abuses was given as being ownership of theatres by producers and distributors in small towns; the suggestion was made that they must make up their minds to give up their theatre activities in such towns.

One other of the abuses is the demand for payment of a score charge in the cases of pictures played on percentage; there is no justification whatever for this practice, because, when a picture is played on percentage, it is a partnership affair for that particular picture, and the distributor should be under the moral obligation of furnishing his picture complete, and not divided into two parts, film exhibition and sound reproduction.

Still another abuse is the demand of a minimum guarantee in the cases where pictures are played on percentage. There is no justification for such a demand either.

The producers justify such a demand by asserting that in most cases the exhibitors will not exert their greatest efforts at publicizing a picture, but this is all talk—most pictures do harm if the exhibitors were to publicize them extensively. And the proof of it is the fact that many of these pictures are not shown in the producer-owned theatres. There are cases where a theatre-owning producer will not show many of his own pictures in his own theatres. Do you remember an article in a recent issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS in which were given the names of fourteen Warner-First National pictures that were not shown in Warner theatres?

The tail end of the 1937-38 season has proved conclusively that the demand of a minimum guarantee is unjust, unfair, and contrary to sound business principles. For instance, the exhibitors signed their 1937-38 season's contracts, as they signed their contracts in previous seasons, fully expecting that they would receive product of the highest quality. But what has happened? The depression, which struck the country, and naturally the motion picture industry, last October, that is, in the beginning of the picture season, compelled the producers to slash their production budgets. In many cases the money they spent on pictures is about half of what they intended to spend originally. The consequence is that the quality of the pictures has suffered. Never in the history of the talking pictures has the quality been so low.

What is the result? Those exhibitors who guaranteed the producers a minimum amount on the percentage pictures now find themselves obliged to dig into their pockets to make up the difference, hoping afterwards to induce the producers to make an adjustment. If the adjustment is given, the exhibitor still is the loser; if the adjustment is not given—no use giving the answer here.

This paper warns every exhibitor to refuse to sign an application for a contract as long as the distributor insists upon a minimum guarantee. Under the business conditions prevailing, he can afford to wait for the producer to come to his senses.

An exhibitor could make his position much stronger when it comes to bargaining for film for the 1938-39 season if he should shut down his theatre for about two months this summer, thus accumulating a certain number of pictures for use beginning September. He will lose nothing by shutting down during the summer months. He cannot operate his theatre profitably anyway, and though by shutting down he may lose as much money he will at least profit by the accumulation of playable films.

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## THE 25% CANCELLATION FEELER

There is not the least doubt that the producers are no longer "poohooing" the Neely Bill; they now know that the exhibitors mean business—that, though the Bill has not passed both houses before Congress adjourned, it will be re-introduced in the next session in January, with the chances of its being enacted into a law the brightest.

To lull the exhibitors into a false security they are trying to make them believe that a larger percentage of cancellations will effect the reforms the exhibitors want, and will not put the producers into a corner.

From the talks that I have had with Allied leaders, I have been able to ascertain that an increased cancellation privilege will not satisfy the exhibitors, even if such privilege called for a cancellation of as high as 25% of the pictures, for they have learned by experience that the producers will so twist the cancellation provision that the exhibitors will have no advantage whatever. When the 10% cancellation provision was inserted into the NRA Code, it was tied up with so many restrictions that few exhibitors were able to exercise it. And even those who were fortunate enough to exercise it did not profit at all from it, by reason of the fact that when an exhibitor canceled a picture from the

(Continued on last page)



### "City Streets" with Leo Carrillo and Edith Fellows

(Columbia, July 1; time, 68 min.)

This program comedy-drama is good entertainment for the family trade. It is a real tear-jerker; every known trick is used to bring the tears to the eyes. Sophisticated audiences may be bored, but women and adolescents should enjoy it for, in spite of the fact that the story is slightly on the saccharine side, it has human appeal and on several occasions stirs the emotions. Leo Carrillo, in the part of the kind-hearted Italian grocer who makes sacrifices to help crippled Edith Fellows, gives an excellent performance, provoking both laughter and tears. There is no romantic interest:—

When crippled Edith's mother dies, Carrillo, who adored Edith, takes her into his home, where he gives her both care and love. Hearing of the arrival of a famous surgeon, Carrillo goes to see him; but the surgeon informs him that he could not operate for less than \$3,000 since he had made a pledge to use all his fees for the establishment of a new hospital. Carrillo sells his grocery store to pay for the operation. But after the operation Edith still cannot walk; she needed, according to the doctor, spirit and courage to do so, which she lacked. Carrillo finds it difficult to earn a living. And to his sorrow and Edith's, the welfare department puts Edith in an institution. Carrillo contracts pneumonia; the neighborhood priest, realizing that Carrillo needed Edith, rushes to the institution and forcibly takes her away. Stirred by the fact that Carrillo was dying Edith starts to walk towards him; she joyfully shouts the good news to him. The reconciliation and Edith's recovery give Carrillo the desire to live; he regains his health and keeps Edith.

I. Bernstein wrote the story, and Fred Niblo, Jr. and Lou Breslow, the screen play; Albert S. Rogell directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Tommy Bond, Mary Gordon, Helen Jerome Eddy, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Woman Against Woman" with Herbert Marshall, Virginia Bruce and Mary Astor

(MGM, June 17; time, 60 min.)

An interesting marital drama, with a particular appeal for women and high-class audiences. The story, revolving around the problems of divorce where a second wife is concerned, has been handled with intelligence and holds one's interest throughout. Both the acting and the direction are of a superior quality; considering this, and the fact that the plot is logical and the production lavish, "Woman Against Woman" is better than average program fare:—

Harrassed by the demands and selfishness of his wife (Mary Astor), Herbert Marshall finally gets up enough courage to leave her; his only sorrow is the fact that he would not be able to see his baby daughter every day. Miss Astor obtains a divorce; she so cleverly puts the burden of guilt on Marshall, that even his mother sympathizes with her. Marshall goes to Washington on an important matter; at a Senator's reception he meets Virginia Bruce, and they fall madly in love with each other. After listening to Marshall's story about his marital troubles, Miss Bruce still feels she wants to marry him; after the marriage they leave for his home. Miss Bruce immediately finds out the true nature of Miss Astor, who, at every opportunity, manages to make a scene so as to embarrass both Marshall and his new wife. The people of the town, because of their faith in Miss Astor, refuse to take Miss Bruce into their circle. But Miss Astor overplays her hand and reveals herself both to Marshall, who suspected the worst, and to his mother. Miss Bruce, by threatening to expose her to her friends, finally manages to get Miss Astor to change her tactics and to act decently.

Margaret C. Banning wrote the story, and Edward Chodorov, the screen play; he also produced it. Robert Sinclair directed it. In the cast are Janet Beecher, Marjorie Rambeau, Juanita Quigley, Zeffie Tilsbury, and others.

Morally suitable. Class A.

### "Crime Ring" with Allan Lane and Frances Mercer

(RKO, July 8; time, 69 min.)

A fair program melodrama, centering around racketeering in the fortune-telling business. Although far-fetched, it holds one's attention fairly well because of the danger to the hero and the heroine. The most interesting part of the picture is that which shows the methods employed by the fake seers in giving information and signs to clients. For instance, one of the fortune-tellers, by pretending to be blind, orders the client to write her name on a certain pad; this pad is connected with an electric system that registers the name in another room. The name is checked for financial possibilities and then the name, together with the facts, sent to the fortune-teller by means of an electric machine attached to the side of his desk at which he would look and get the information he needed; by repeating the facts, he naturally is able to impress the client and advise her to do whatever he wants.

The rest of the picture is taken up with the efforts of the hero (Allan Lane), a newspaper reporter working with the police, to round up the gang. He eventually does this with the help of the heroine (Frances Mercer), who poses as a fortune-teller so as to get in with the gang. Her identity and connection with the hero are discovered by the gangster leader, who kidnaps her. But she is saved. When they finish the case, Lane and Miss Mercer plan to marry.

Reginald Taviner wrote the story, and Gladys Atwater and J. Robert Bren, the screen play; Leslie Goodwins directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Clara Blandick, Inez Courtney, Bradley Page, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Always Goodbye" with Barbara Stanwyck and Herbert Marshall

(20th Century-Fox, July 1; time, 74½ min.)

A good box-office attraction, but only fair in entertainment value. It should find favor mostly with women because of the mother love angle. The production is lavish, and the performances are good; but at times the action is slow, owing to an over-abundance of dialogue and padding. The second half has considerable human appeal, for there the heroine, after a five-year separation from her child, comes in contact with him again. The child is played delightfully by five-year old John Russell, who speaks his lines like a veteran and acts with ease; he makes each scene in which he appears outstanding. Occasional bits of comedy, contributed by Cesar Romero, are of considerable help:—

Distracted by the accidental death of her lover, whom she was to have married that day, Barbara Stanwyck considers jumping into the river. She is stopped from doing this by Herbert Marshall. He takes her to his apartment for a rest; there she breaks down and tells him she was going to have a baby. Marshall insists on seeing her through the difficult period; at the birth of her son, he arranges for a fine, wealthy couple to adopt the child. He then obtains a position for Miss Stanwyck with a friend (Binnie Barnes), owner of a fashionable dressmaking establishment, after which he leaves on one of his jaunts as a ship doctor. In five years, Miss Stanwyck rises to a position of prominence; on the day she was to sail for Paris, Marshall returns. Miss Stanwyck threatens to give up her trip unless he promised to stay in New York until she returned. In a fashionable Paris hotel she meets her child, who takes a liking to her. Learning that his mother was dead and that he was leaving for New York with his nurse, she books passage on the same boat and devotes all her time to him. On landing she meets his father (Ian Hunter), and Hunter's fiancée (Lynn Bari). She has occasion to meet Miss Bari again and, realizing that she was a gold-digger who would not give Johnnie any love, she purposely sets out to break up the match; she succeeds. When Hunter, who had fallen in love with her, proposes, she accepts him, even though she loved Marshall; Marshall understands for he, too, felt that her first duty was to her child.

Gilbert Emery and Douglas Doty wrote the story, and Katharine Scola and Edith Skouras, the screen play; Sidney Lanfield directed it, and Raymond Griffith produced it.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.



### **"Danger on the Air" with Donald Woods and Nan Grey**

(Universal, July 1; time, 66 min.)

A good program murder-mystery melodrama. Although developed in the routine manner, with several characters as suspects, it holds one's attention throughout, for neither the method by which the murders are committed nor the murderer's identity are disclosed until the end. It moves at a brisk pace, with a few exciting situations and occasional laughs. Some of the excitement is caused by the entry into the story of gangsters, who had worked with the murdered man in ruining his competitors. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

Berton Churchill, an important sponsor of a radio program, is hated by every one because of his irascibility, interference with the program, and amorous approaches to every pretty girl he met. One night, during a broadcast, he is murdered. Donald Woods, an employee of the radio station, sets out to solve the case. Working with him is Nan Grey, one of the members of the agency that had handled Churchill's account. She, as well as her brother, were under suspicion. Woods finally discovers how the murder had been committed—by means of a poison gas seeping through a balloon. But before he could name the murderer, another man is killed in the same way. Woods finally traps the murderer (William Lundigan) into confessing—Churchill had ruined his father's business, as he had done others, by a whispering campaign; the other man had been killed accidentally. With their work finished, Woods and Miss Grey look forward to marriage and a honeymoon.

The plot was adapted from the story "Death Catches Up With Mr. Kluck" by Xantippe; Betty Laidlaw and Robert Lively wrote the screen play, Otis Garrett directed it, and Irving Starr produced it. In the cast are Jed Prouty, Skeets Gallagher, George Meeker, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

### **"Young Fugitives" with Harry Davenport, Dorothea Kent and Robert Wilcox**

(Universal, June 17; time, 68 min.)

A moderately entertaining program picture. The outstanding feature is the performance given by Harry Davenport; he makes the character he plays loveable and appealing, one with whom the spectator is in sympathy throughout. But the action is, for the most part, mild. As a matter of fact, it is not until the closing scenes that anything exciting happens; there one is held in some suspense when a gang of crooks try to steal a large sum of money Davenport had won. The romance is routine:—

When Davenport wins the \$50,000 pool set aside for the last member of his G.A.R. Post, he retires to a farm with an old friend; he keeps the money in a box at home. His hope was to find the grandson (Robert Wilcox) of his old pal, whose death had made Davenport the winner of the pool, and help the young man along. He is happy when Wilcox shows up; but when he refuses to stay on the farm, Davenport gives him \$2,500. Wilcox leaves in his car and takes with him Dorothea Kent, who, living the life of a hobo, had accepted a night's lodging and food from Davenport but was on her way again. When Wilcox hears about the \$50,000, he decides to turn back. But Miss Kent, knowing what he was up to, insists on going back, too, for she had formed an attachment for Davenport. Former gangster pals of Wilcox's find him at the farm; having read about the \$50,000, they demand that Davenport turn the money over to them. The timely arrival of paraders, who had assembled for the yearly march with Davenport as their leader, routs the gangsters, who are captured. Wilcox is happy, for he had become reformed, and looked forward to a simple life with Miss Kent as his wife.

Edward James wrote the story, and Ben G. Kohn and Charles Grayson, the screen play; John Rawlins directed it, and Barney A. Sarecky produced it. In the cast are Larry Blake, Tom Ricketts, and others.

Since the hero is reformed it is suitable for children. Class A.

### **"Three Blind Mice" with Loretta Young and Joel McCrea**

(20th Century-Fox, June 17; time, 75 min.)

A good comedy. Despite a weak story, the picture is quite entertaining because of sparkling dialogue and amus-

ing characterizations. Another thing in its favor, as far as women are concerned, is the lavish production, which gives Loretta Young an opportunity to display fashionable clothes. But it is to Binnie Barnes' credit that the picture offers as many laughs as it does; in the part of the somewhat scatter-brained, energetic sister of millionaire David Niven, she provokes hearty laughs by her frank manner and irrational actions:—

When three sisters (Loretta Young, Marjorie Weaver, and Pauline Moore) receive a \$5,000 legacy, they decide to give up their chicken farm, for the purpose of trying to find a rich husband for Miss Young. They buy her beautiful clothes and leave for a fashionable resort, where Miss Moore poses as the secretary and Miss Weaver as the maid. Miss Young gets the information she needs about the eligible men from Stuart Erwin, the bartender. Her choice dwindles down to two—David Niven and Joel McCrea. She really falls in love with McCrea, only to learn that he had a fine background but no money, and that he had been looking for a rich wife. They part, and Miss Young accepts Niven's proposal, leaving with him and her sisters for his ranch. They are followed there by Erwin, who had found out about their scheme and, hating gold-diggers, threatened to tell Niven. But everything turns out satisfactorily when McCrea suddenly appears. He and Miss Young are reconciled; this makes Niven very happy for he had discovered that it was Miss Moore he really loved. And Miss Weaver marries Erwin who, it develops, was a millionaire rancher, too.

Stephen Powys wrote the story, and Brown Holmes and Lynn Starling, the screen play; William A. Seiter directed it, and Raymond Griffith produced it. In the cast are Jane Darwell, Leonid Kinskey, Spencer Charters, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Lord Jeff" with Freddie Bartholomew and Mickey Rooney**

(MGM, June 24; time, 84½ min.)

Very good! In a human, plausible, and touching way, it shows the reformation of a young boy from crookedness and snobbery to decency and tolerance; and it does this without any preachments. The performances are excellent; but it is Terry Kilburn, a youngster with a Scottish accent and a simpleness of manner, who is outstanding; he wins the spectator over completely by his appealing manner, facial expressions and ability to read his lines. There are several situations that bring tears to the eyes, and others that provoke hearty laughter. Even though one knows how the story will end, one does not lose interest in the outcome. There is no love interest. The background is England:—

Freddie Bartholomew, assistant to a clever pair of crooks, is arrested after a jewel theft; the crooks escape. Freddie, who had been educated and trained as a gentleman, refuses to talk. Feeling sorry for him, the judge, instead of sending him to a reformatory, assigns him to a mercantile marine school, which was part of a famous system of training schools for orphans. Freddie makes himself disliked by his snobbish ways. Mickey Rooney, an honor student, tries to help Freddie but is rebuffed. When Freddie tries to run away, Mickey goes after him, returning to quarters late at night. Freddie gets in first, but Mickey is caught climbing in; since Freddie remains silent and Mickey refuses to give the facts, Mickey's stripes are taken away from him, and his chances of being assigned to the S. S. Queen Mary are in doubt. All the boys at the school, with the exception of Terry, who idolized Freddie, refuse to talk to Freddie. Eventually the spirit of the place gets him, and he is reformed; he goes to the head of the school and clears Mickey's name. The boys then become his friends, and he is overjoyed when he is told that he, too, would be assigned to the S. S. Queen Mary. The crooks return and manage to get to Freddie, who refuses to have anything to do with them. But when they hear about the Queen Mary trip, they book passage on the same ship, and sew the necklace in Freddie's coat. This is discovered by the school matron, who believes in Freddie. The crooks are finally caught, and Freddie is free to take the job.

Bradford Ropes, Val Burton and Eudre Bohem wrote the story, and James K. McGuinness, the screen play; Sam Wood directed it, and Frank Davis produced it. In the cast are Charles Coburn, Herbert Mundin, Gale Sondergaard, and others.

Class A.



higher allocation groups, the distributor would, as is well known, put in its place one from the lowest allocation groups, on the same terms as those of the more expensive picture. In this manner the exhibitors had the cancellation privilege in name only. The same sort of cancellation provision has been inserted in the contracts ever since (with the exception of Columbia, which company eliminated it altogether last season and also this season).

But although the cancellation provision was an empty offer, the producers were able to use it in their propaganda to the public to convince the friends of the Neely Bill that the exhibitors now had the right to exclude ten per cent of the undesirable pictures, and that, as a result of it, there was no need for the Neely measure.

The exhibitors are now determined that they shall not give the distributors another such chance. If they should ever decide to accept a producer offer for a higher cancellation percentage, I am sure that they will demand that this privilege be so framed as to confer upon them a real right. And even then, it must come along with other substantial reforms, particularly on the subject of theatre acquisitions and theatre operations in small towns.

### SUCCESS OF "SHEIK" A FREAK

The success of "The Sheik," the Paramount silent picture with Rudolph Valentino, now dead, may release a flood of silent re-issues, and this paper wishes to warn the exhibitors against too many re-issues, silent or talking, for these cannot help hurting the business in the end. And the reason for it is the fact that the technique of the old pictures is so far behind the present technique that it makes people laugh.

Most people go to see "The Sheik" out of curiosity; and they have the time of their lives watching the crude way of acting of those days and other production shortcomings.

"The Son of the Sheik," United Artists, played two weeks only; "The Sheik" may play five weeks.

### KUYKENDALL AGAIN IN PRINT

Our good friend Ed. Kuykendall, president of Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America, is again getting into "print"; the trade papers carry news item about what he has said regarding arbitration, and how he feels toward conciliation.

This paper has stated in these columns that, with as much personal respect as the writer has for Mr. Kuykendall, he has identified himself with the subsidized organization which he heads for so long that any connection between him and his organization with a movement for conciliation between producers and exhibitors will fail, by reason of the fact that, if MPTOA were to be dragged into it, the exhibitors would feel that there is no sincerity back of the producers' offer to get together with the exhibitors, and that the old crowd insists upon doing things the same old way.

The producers have undoubtedly become aware of the fact that the independent exhibitors are represented only by one organization—

Allied States Association. Any conciliation movement, then, should be undertaken with no other exhibitor organization than Allied States. It is only thus that such a movement will have a chance for success.

### THE THEATRE OWNING PRODUCERS ARE AGAIN IN THE SAME POSITION AS IN 1932

Many persons connected with the motion picture industry believe that what laws will not do to the producer circuits the depression will do it. Some of these circuits are again in the tough position in which they were in 1932 and thereabouts—losing money, and the home offices are using the receipts from the pictures to cover the losses from the operation of the theatres.

And this is only the beginning: what will happen by the time we get to fall is another tale.

It is the belief of HARRISON'S REPORTS that what legislation and the depression will not do to these circuits labor conditions will, for an affiliated theatre is not like an independent: when an affiliated theatre is in trouble with labor and refuses to capitulate, bringing about a strike, the workers may be pulled in every one of that circuit's theatres.

The theatre-owning producers should think seriously of getting out of the small towns. It will pay them in the end.

### IMPORTANT MATTERS BROUGHT TO LIGHT AT THE FARGO TRIAL

As a result of the action brought by Paramount to have the North Dakota measure declared unconstitutional, many interesting facts were brought to light. Here are a few of them:

(1) Paramount owns theatres aggregating 1,335,928 seats out of 9,855,325, which is the total number of seats in all the theatres in the United States; or 13.55%.

(2) The total number of seats in North Dakota is 46,606. Of these, Paramount owns 7,792; or 16.72% (even though it has slightly more than 5% of the number of theatres, owning 10 out of a total number of 168.)

(3) The total number of theatres in the Minnesota territory is 964, with a seating capacity of 355,776. Of these, Paramount owns 101 theatres with 86,373 seats; that is, 10.37% of the theatres and 24¼% of the seats.

(4) As of January 1, 1938, Paramount's total assets were of the gross value of \$120,219,281.03, made up as follows: American companies of the value of \$91,005,843.28; foreign companies, including Canada, of the value of \$29,213,437.75. The total income of Paramount during the fiscal year of 1936 (53 weeks) was \$107,347,155.90, of which \$74,324,366.36 represented the total domestic income, and \$33,022,749.54 the Canadian and foreign.

(5) At the time of the trial, the total number of theatres Paramount owned was more than 1,300. On April 1, 1937, the last date on which complete information was available, Paramount had stock interest as follows: 100%, in 194 theatres; from 51% to 99.99%, in 195 theatres; 50%, in 511 theatres; and less than 50%, in 355 theatres, a total number of 1,255 theatres at that time.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XX

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JULY 2, 1938

No. 27

(Semi-Annual Index—First Half of 1938)

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## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

8205 Law of the Plains—Starrett (56m.) ..... May 12  
 8001 Holiday—Hepburn-Grant-Nolan ..... June 15  
 8211 Stagecoach Days—All Star western (58m.) ..... June 20  
 Highway Patrol—Wells-Page ..... June 27  
 8206 West of Cheyenne—Starrett (53m.) ..... June 30  
 City Streets (City Shadows)—Carrillo-  
 Fellows (reset) ..... July 1  
 8212 Pioneer Trail—All Star western (55m.) ..... July 15  
 Reformatory—Jack Holt-F. Darrow ..... July 21  
 8207 South of Arizona—Starrett ..... July 28  
 The Gladiator—Joe E. Brown ..... Aug. 15  
 8213 Phantom Gold—All Star western ..... Aug. 22  
 Outside the Law—Ed. G. Robinson ..... Aug. 25

## First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

259 Crime School—Bogart-Page ..... May 28  
 263 When Were You Born?—Lindsay-Wong ..... June 18  
 260 My Bill—Francis-Granville-Louise ..... July 16  
 276 Penrod's Double Trouble—Mauch Twins ..... July 30

## Gaumont-British Features

(1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

### 1937-38 Season

Non-Stop New York—Anna Lee-John Loder .... Nov. 17  
 I Was a Spy—M. Carroll-Marshall (Reissue) .... Jan. 1  
 Look Out For Love—Neagle-Carmanati ..... Jan. 15  
 Wife of General Ling—Jones-Inkijinoff ..... Feb. 1  
 The Girl Was Young—Nova Pilbeam ..... Feb. 15  
 F.P.1 Doesn't Answer (F.P.1)—Reissue ..... May 1  
 (End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

Sailing Along—Jessie Matthews ..... Apr. 15  
 To the Victor—Fyffe-Loder-Lockwood (re.) .... May 1  
 The Show Goes On—Neagle-Carmanati (re.) .... June 15  
 Three On a Week-End—Lockwood-Lodge (re.) .... July 1  
 Evergreen—Reissue ..... July 15  
 Strange Boarders—Walls-Saint Cyr ..... Aug. 1  
 Crime Over London—M. Grahame-Cavan'gh (re.) Aug. 15

## Grand National Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

219 International Crime—LaRocque-Allwyn ..... Apr. 22  
 221 Whirlwind Horsemen—Maynard ..... Apr. 29  
 224 Six Shootin' Sheriff—Ken Maynard ..... May 21  
 223 Life Returns—Wilson-Stevens ..... June 10  
 222 Held For Ransom—Mehaffey-Withers ..... June 17  
 225 I Married a Spy—Neil Hamilton ..... July 1  
 226 Rollin' Plains—Tex Ritter ..... July 8  
 227 I Command—Lionel Atwill ..... July 15  
 228 Renfrew on the Great White Trail—Newill ..... July 22  
 229 The Utah Trail—Tex Ritter ..... Aug. 12

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

832 Three Comrades—Taylor-Sullivan-Tone .... June 3  
 836 The Toy Wife—Rainer-Douglas-Young ..... June 10  
 838 Woman Against Woman (One Woman's  
 Answer)—Bruce-Marshall-Astor (reset) .. June 17  
 837 Lord Jeff—Bartholomew-Rooney (reset) .... June 24  
 Fast Company—Douglas-Rice ..... July 8  
 The Crowd Roars—Taylor-O'Sullivan ..... July 15  
 Love Finds Andy Hardy—Stone-Rooney ..... July 22

## Monogram Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3722 Telephone Operator—Allen-White (61m.) r. Jan. 12  
 3727 West of Rainbow's End—McCoy (57m.) .... Jan. 19  
 3724 Saleslady—Nagel-Heyburn (reset) ..... Jan. 27  
 3736 Where the West Begins—Randall (54m.) .. Feb. 3



3719 My Old Kentucky Home—Venable-Hall (r.) Feb. 12  
 3733 The Painted Trail—Tom Keene (50m.) (r.) Feb. 20  
 3725 Port of Missing Girls—Allen-Carey (r.) Feb. 23  
 3728 Code of the Rangers—Tim McCoy (56m.) Mar. 9  
 3715 Rose of the Rio Grande—Movita (re.) Mar. 23  
 3739 Land of Fighting Men—Randall (53m.) Apr. 11  
 3713 Female Fugitive—Venable-Reynolds Apr. 15  
 3729 Two Gun Justice—Tim McCoy (57m.) (re.) May 13  
 3709 Numbered Woman (Private Nurse)—Blane May 22  
 3730 Phantom Ranger—Tim McCoy (53m.) May 29  
 3712 Marines Are Here—Travis-Oliver June 8  
 3702 Romance of the Limberlost—Parker June 22  
 3742 Man's Country—Jack Randall July 6  
 3741 Last Frontier—Jack Randall Aug. 17  
 3740 Gun Smoke Trail—Jack Randall (56m.) (r.) Sept. 2

### Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

3738 Stolen Heaven—Raymond-Bradna May 13  
 3740 Coconut Grove—MacMurray-Hilliard May 20  
 3741 Hunted Men—Nolan-Carlisle-Overman May 27  
 No release set for June 3  
 3742 You and Me—Raft-Sidney-MacLane June 10  
 3743 Prison Farm—Ross-Nolan-Howard June 17  
 3758 Bar 20 Justice—Wm. Boyd-Gaze June 24  
 No release set for July 1  
 No release set for July 15  
 3744 Tropic Holiday—Lamour-Burns-Raye July 22  
 Booloo—Tapley-Lane July 22  
 Professor Beware—Lloyd-Welch July 29  
 Give Me a Sailor—Raye-Hope-Grable Aug. 5  
 The Texans—J. Bennett-Scott-Robson Aug. 12  
 (more to come)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

3854 Pride of the West—Wm. Boyd-Hayes July 8

### Republic Features

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

7008 Prison Nurse—Wilcoxon-Marsh Mar. 29  
 7116 Outlaws of Sonora—Three Mesq. (55m.) Apr. 11  
 7009 King of the Newsboys—Ayres-Mack Apr. 15  
 7126 The Feud Maker—Bob Steele (55m.) Apr. 18  
 7022 Arson Gang Busters—Livingston Apr. 25  
 7010 Invisible Enemy—Marshall-Correll May 2  
 7011 Call of the Yukon—Arlen-Roberts May 16  
 7012 Romance on the Run—Woods-Ellis June 8  
 7004 Gangs of New York—Bickford-Dvorak June 13  
 7127 Desert Patrol—Steele (56m.) June 27  
 7117 Riders of the Black Hill—3 Mesq. (55m.) July 6  
 7012 Ladies in Distress—Skipworth-Moran July 11  
 Army Girl—Evans-Foster July 28  
 Gold Mine in the Sky—Autry Aug. 1  
 7128 Darango Valley Raiders—Steele Aug. 8

### RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

881 Gunlaw—George O'Brien (60 min.) May 13  
 829 Blind Alibi—Dix-Bourne May 20  
 830 Saint in New York—Hayward-Sutton June 3  
 870 King Kong—Reissue June 10  
 831 Blond Cheat—Fontaine-DeMarney June 17  
 882 Border G Man—George O'Brien June 24  
 819 Having Wonderful Time—Rogers-Fairbanks July 1  
 836 Crime Ring—Lane-Mercer July 8  
 871 Little Women—Reissue July 8

### Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

843 Island in the Sky—Stuart-Whalen Apr. 1  
 842 Rawhide—Ballew-Gehrig-Knapp Apr. 8  
 840 In Old Chicago—Power-Faye-Ameche Apr. 15  
 845 Battle of Broadway—MacLaglen-Hovick Apr. 22  
 848 Four Men and a Prayer—Young-Grcene Apr. 29  
 847 A Trip to Paris—Prouty-Deane May 6  
 874 Life Begins at Forty—Rogers reissue May 6  
 844 Kentucky Moonshine—Ritz Brothers May 13  
 849 Rascals—Withers-Hudson-Wilcox May 20  
 846 Kidnapped—Baxter-Bartholomew-Whelan May 27  
 839 Josette—Amech-Simon-Young June 3  
 850 One Wild Night—Lang-Baldwin-Talbot June 10  
 851 Three Blind Mice—Young-McCrea June 17  
 819 Mr. Moto Takes a Chance—Lorre-Hudson June 24  
 852 Always Goodbye—Stanwyck-Marshall July 1  
 857 We're Going to Be Rich—Fields-McLaglen July 8  
 853 Panamint's Bad Man—Ballew-Becry-Daw July 8  
 854 Passport Husband—Erwin-Moor-Fowley July 15  
 855 I'll Give a Million—Baxter-Weaver July 22  
 856 Little Miss Broadway—Temple-Murphy July 29

### United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Adventures of Marco Polo—Cooper-Gurie Apr. 15  
 Divorce of Lady X—Oberon-Olivier Apr. 15  
 The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel—Stewart-Scott-Lister Apr. 29  
 Count of Monte Cristo—Reissue May 13  
 I Cover the Waterfront—Reissue May 13  
 Blockade—Fonda-Carroll-Carrillo June 17  
 (End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

Algiers—Boyer-Gurie-Lamarr July 22  
 The Young in Heart—Gaynor-Fairbanks, Jr. July 29  
 There Goes My Heart—March-Bruce-Kelly Aug. 26

### Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

A2027 Lady in the Morgue—Foster-Ellis Apr. 22  
 A2011 Sinners in Paradise—Boles-Evans May 6  
 A2038 Air Devils—Wallace-Blake-Purcell May 13  
 A3071 All Quiet on the Western Front—Reissue (87 min.) May 15  
 A3072 Frankenstein—Reissue (71 min.) May 15  
 A3073 Love Before Breakfast—Reissue (71m.) May 15  
 A3074 Lady Tubbs—Reissue (70 min.) May 15  
 A2009 The Devil's Party—McLaglen-Wilcox May 20  
 A2010 Wives Under Suspicion (Suspicion)—William-Patrick (reset) June 3  
 A2058 Western Trails—Bob Baker (57 min.) June 3  
 A2059 Outlaw Express—Bob Baker (56 min.) June 17  
 Young Fugitives—Kent-Wilcox (68m.) June 17  
 Danger on the Air—Woods-Grey July 1  
 Rage of Paris—Darrioux-Fairbanks, Jr. July 1  
 Prison Break—Farrell-MacLane July 22  
 Letter of Introduction—Leeds-Menjou July 29  
 ("Rocket Ship" listed in the last Index as a June 3 release has been withdrawn)

### Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

222 Accidents Will Happen—Reagan-G. Blondell Apr. 9  
 219 Little Miss Thoroughbred—Sheridan-Litel June 4  
 206 Gold Diggers in Paris—Vallee-R. Lane June 11  
 208 White Banners—Rains-Bainter-Cooper June 25  
 215 Men Are Such Fools—Morris-P. Lane July 9  
 213 Racket Busters—Bogart-Brent-Dickson July 23

## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

8859 Screen Snapshots No. 9—(9½m.) Apr. 29  
 8553 Friendly Neighbors—Around the World in Color (9½ min.) Apr. 29  
 8658 Community Sing No. 8—(10½m.) May 6  
 8808 Sport Stamina—World of Sport (9½m.) May 10  
 8508 The Big Birdcast—Col. Rhapsody (7m.) May 13  
 8705 Krazy Magic—Krazy Kat (6½m.) May 20  
 8860 Screen Snapshots No. 10—(9½m.) May 27  
 8509 Window Shopping—Col. Rhapsody (7½m.) June 3  
 8809 Thrilling Moments—W. of Sport (10m.) June 10  
 8659 Community Sing No. 9—(8½m.) June 25  
 8810 Fistic Fun—World of Sport July 1  
 8510 Poor Little Butterfly—Col. Rhapsody July 4  
 8706 Krazy's Travel Squawks—K. Kat (6½m.) July 4  
 8660 Community Sing No. 10—(9½m.) July 4  
 8758 City Slicker—Scrappys July 8  
 8511 Poor Elmer—Color Rhapsody July 22

### Columbia—Two Reels

8167 The Cannon Roars—Secret No. 7 (19m.) Apr. 28  
 8433 The Mind Needer—All Star (18m.) Apr. 29  
 8168 The Circle of Death—Secret No. 8 (19½m.) May 2  
 8169 The Pirate's Revenge—Secret No. 9 (19m.) May 9  
 8434 Ankles Away—All Star com. (17½m.) May 13  
 8170 The Crash—Secret No. 10 (19m.) May 16  
 8407 Healthy, Wealthy and Dumb—Stooges (16½ min.) May 20  
 8171 Dynamite—Secret No. 11 (18½m.) May 23  
 8172 Bridge of Doom—Secret No. 12 (19m.) May 30  
 8435 The Soul of a Heel—All Star com. (16m.) June 4  
 8173 The Mad Flight—Secret No. 13 (19m.) June 6  
 8174 The Jaws of Destruction—Secret No. 14 (19 min.) June 13  
 8175 Justice—Secret No. 15 June 20  
 8436 Halfway to Hollywood—All Star (17m.) July 1  
 8408 Three Missing Links—Stooges (18m.) July 29  
 (End of 2 reels for 1937-38 Season)



## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

W-684 The Captain's Pup—Captain cart. (9m.)...Apr. 30  
M-676 That Mothers Might Live—Mini. (10m.)...Apr. 30  
S-708 Modeling For Money—Specialties (10m.)...Apr. 30  
C-738 Feed 'Em and Weep—Our Gang (11m.)...May 7  
M-677 The Forgotten Step—Miniatures (10m.)...May 7  
T-660 Rural Sweden—Traveltalks (8m.)...May 14  
F-755 An Evening Alone—Benchley (9m.)...May 14  
S-709 Surf Heroes—Specialties (10m.)...May 28  
M-678 Hollywood Handicap—Miniatures (10m.)...May 28  
C-739 The Awful Tooth—Our Gang (10m.)...May 28  
H-726 Joaquin Murrieta—Hist. Myst. (11m.)...June 11  
T-661 Czechoslovakia on Parade—Travel. (9m.)...June 11  
M-679 Tupapaoo—Miniatures (11m.)...June 11  
S-710 The Story of Dr. Carver—P. Smith (10m.)...June 18  
C-740 Hide and Shriek—Our Gang (11m.)...June 18  
W-685 A Day at the Beach—Captain cartoon...June 25  
F-756 How to Raise a Baby—Benchley...July 2  
T-662 Paris on Parade—Traveltalks...July 9  
S-711 Anaesthesia—Pete Smith...July 9

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

R-603 Billy Rose's Casa Manana Revue—  
Musical (21 min.)...Mar. 26  
R-604 Snow Gets in Your Eyes—Musical (20m.)...May 14  
P-613 Come Across—Crime D. Pay (21m.)...May 14  
P-614 A Criminal Is Born—Crime D. Pay...June 25

## Paramount—One Reel

T7-8 Honest Love and True—Betty Boop (8m.)...Mar. 25  
SC7-4 Thanks for the Memory—Sc. Song (7 m.)...Mar. 25  
P7-9 Paramount Pictorial No. 9—(9½ m.)...Apr. 1  
A7-11 Hall's Holiday—Headliner (9½ m.)...Apr. 8  
E7-9 Big Chief Ugh-Amugh-Ugh—Popeye (7m.)...Apr. 15  
L7-5 Unusual Occupations No. 5—(10 min.)...Apr. 15  
V7-10 The Bike Parade—Paragraphic (9½ m.)...Apr. 22  
R7-10 Win, Place or Show—Sportlight (9½m.)...Apr. 22  
T7-9 Out of the Inkwell—Betty Boop (5½ m.)...Apr. 22  
C7-5 Hold It—Color Classic (7 min.)...Apr. 29  
A7-12 Bob Crosby and His Orchestra—  
Headliner (10 min.)...May 6  
P7-10 Paramount Pictorial No. 10—(9 m.)...May 6  
J7-5 Popular Science No. 5—(9½m.)...May 13  
V7-11 Crime Fighters—Paragraphic (9½m.)...May 20  
R7-11 Red, White and Blue Champions—  
Sportlight (9½ min.)...May 20  
E7-10 I Yam Love Sick—Popeye (8m.)...May 20  
T7-10 Swing School—Betty Boop (6½m.)...May 27  
SC7-5 You Leave Me Breathless—Sw. S. (7½m.)...May 27  
A7-13 Easy on the Ice—Headliner (9m.)...June 3  
P7-11 Paramount Pictorial No. 11—(8½m.)...June 3  
L7-6 Unusual Occupations No. 6—(10m.)...June 10  
V7-12 Find What's Wrong—Para. (9½m.)...June 17  
R7-12 Strike!—Sportlight (9½m.)...June 17  
E7-11 Plumbing is a "Pipe"—Popeye (7m.)...June 17  
T7-11 The Lost Kitten—Betty Boop (7m.)...June 24  
C7-6 Hunky and Spunky—Color Classic...June 24  
P7-12 Paramount Pictorial No. 12—(9m.)...July 1  
A7-14 Queens of the Air—Headliner...July 8  
J7-6 Popular Science No. 6...July 8  
V7-13 Not Yet Titled—Paragraphic...July 15  
R7-13 Horse Shoes—Sportlight (9m.)...July 15  
E7-12 The Jeep—Popeye...July 15  
T7-12 Pudgy the Watchman—Betty Boop...July 22  
SC7-6 Beside a Moonlit Stream—Screen Song...July 29  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

## RKO—One Reel

84113 Wynken, Blynken and Nod—Disney (8m.)...May 27  
84211 International Rhythm—Nu Atlas (10m.)...June 3  
84307 Underwater—Sportscope (9m.)...June 3  
84114 Polar Trappers—Disney cart. (8m.)...June 17  
84606 Pathe Parade—(9m.)...June 17  
84212 Carnival Show—Nu Atlas (10m.)...June 24  
84308 Flying Feathers—Sportscope (9m.)...June 24  
84115 Good Scouts—Disney cart. (8m.)...July 8  
84213 Hockshop Blues—Nu Atlas (10m.)...July 15  
84309 Not Yet Titled—Sportscope...July 15  
84116 The Fox Hunt—Disney cart. (8m.)...July 29

## RKO—Two Reels

83110 March of Time—(19m.)...May 13  
83405 Kennedy's Castle—E. Kennedy (17m.)...May 28  
83603 Picketing For Love—Headliner (17m.)...June 3  
83111 March of Time—(17m.)...June 10  
83203 The Photografter—Radio Play. (15m.)...June 17  
83706 The Jitters—Leon Errol (19m.)...July 1  
83112 March of Time...July 8  
83406 Fool Coverage—E. Kennedy (16m.)...July 15

## Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

8517 A Mountain Romance—T. Toon (6½m.)...Apr. 1  
8604 Kingdom For a Horse—Treas. Ch. (10) (r)...Apr. 8  
8518 Robinson Crusoe's Broadcast—T.T. (6½m.)...Apr. 15  
8608 Return of the Buffalo—Tr. Ch. (10m.) (r)...Apr. 22  
8519 Maid in China—Terry-Toon (7m.)...Apr. 29  
8520 The Big Top—Terry-Toon (6½m.)...May 13  
8521 Devil of the Deep—Terry-Toon (6½m.)...May 27  
8522 Here's To Good Old Jail—T. Toon (6½m.)...June 10  
8523 The Last Indian—Terry-Toon (6½m.)...June 24  
8524 Milk For Baby—Terry-Toon...July 8  
8609 We Live in Two Worlds—Treas. Chest...July 22  
8525 Mrs. O'Leary's Cow—Terry-Toon...July 22  
8526 Eliza Runs Again—Terry-Toon...July 29

## Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

8118 Cute Crime—Jefferson Machamer (19m.)...Apr. 29  
8205 Money On Your Life—Kemper-Kaye (19m.)...May 13  
8119 Jitterbugs—West-Patricola (16½m.)...May 20  
8206 Cactus Caballeros—Gribbon-Fay (19m.)...May 27  
8120 Pardon My Accident—W. Howard (17½m.)...June 10  
8310 Winner Lose All—Kemper...June 17

## Universal—One Reel

A2284 The Problem Child—Oswald cart. (7m.)...May 16  
A2285 Movie Phoney News—Oswald (7m.)...May 30  
A2395 Stranger Than Fiction No. 51—(9m.)...June 6  
A2286 Nellie, The Indian Chief's Daughter—  
Oswald cartoon (7 min.)...June 6  
A2382 Going Places with Thomas No. 51 (10m.)...June 13  
A2396 Stranger Than Fiction No. 52—(9m.)...June 20  
A2287 Happy Scouts—Oswald cart. (7m.)...June 20  
A2383 Going Places with Thomas No. 52 (9m.)...June 27  
A2288 Cheese Nappers—Oswald cart. (7m.)...July 4  
A2289 Voodoo Harlem—Oswald cart. (7m.)...July 18  
(more to come)

## Universal—Two Reels

A2592 Ming the Merciless—Flash No. 12 (20m.)...June 7  
A2593 The Miracle of Magic—Fl. No. 13 (21m.)...June 14  
A2171 Music and Flowers—Mentone (19m.)...June 15  
A2594 A Beast at Bay—Flash No. 14 (19m.)...June 21  
A2595 An Eye For an Eye—Flash No. 15 (18m.)...June 28  
A2172 Stars in Stripes—Mentone (17½m.)...July 6  
A2173 Fits and Benefits—Mentone...Rel. date not set  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

## Beginning of 1938-39 Season

A3581 The River Runs Red—Flaming Frontiers  
No. 1 (21 min.)...July 5  
A3582 Death Rides the Wind—Flam. No. 2 (21m.)...July 12  
A3583 Treachery at Eagle Pass—Fl. No. 3 (19m.)...July 19  
A3584 A Night of Terror—Flaming No. 4 (23m.)...July 26

## Vitaphone—One Reel

3809 Silverware-Ice Btg.-Trains—Pic. Re. (9m.)...Apr. 30  
3610 Porky's Hare Hunt—L. Tunes (7m.)...Apr. 30  
3713 Carl "Deacon" Moore & Orch.—Melody  
Master (10 min.)...May 7  
3412 Now That Summer Is Gone—M. Mel. (6m.)...May 14  
3910 The Juggling Fool—Varieties (11m.)...May 14  
3309 Wanderlust—True Adventures (13m.)...May 14  
3509 Pearl of the East—Color-Tour (10m.)...May 21  
3611 Injun Trouble—L. Tunes (7m.)...May 21  
3714 Freddie Rich & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.)...May 28  
3413 Isle of Pingo Pongo—M. Mel. (8m.)...May 28  
3310 A Dream Comes True—True Adv. (12m.)...June 4  
3511 Mechanix Illustrated—Color-Tour...June 4  
3810 Beavers-Polo-Woolens—Pic. Re. (10m.)...June 4  
3414 Katnip Kollege—Mer. Mel. (7m.)...June 11  
3911 Vitaphone Capers—Vit. Var. (9m.)...June 18  
3715 Clyde Lucas & Orch.—Mel. Mas. (9m.)...June 18  
3311 Not Yet Titled—True Adventures...July 2  
3716 Don Bestor & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (9m.)...July 9  
3811 Bakelite-Greyhounds-Perfume—Pic. Rev. ...July 9

## Vitaphone—Two Reels

3010 Little Me—Wini Shaw (22m.)...Mar. 5  
3005 Romance of Louisiana—Tech. (18m.)...Mar. 12  
3022 Under the Wire—Comedy (20m.)...Mar. 26  
3016 Got a Match—Revue (19 m.)...Apr. 9  
3028 Hold That Ball—Gay-Eties (19 min.)...Apr. 23  
3011 Forget Me Knots—Claire (Tech.) (21 m.)...May 7  
3023 Stocks & Blondes—Comedy (18 min.)...May 21  
3004 Out Where the Stars Begin—Tech. (19m.)...May 28  
3012 Prisoner of Swing—Headliner (21m.)...June 11  
3029 Rise and Sing—Gay-Eties (21m.)...June 25  
3017 Rainbow's End—Revue (22m.)...July 2  
3024 My Pop—Henry Armetta (22m.)...July 16

## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

### Universal

682 Saturday...July 9  
683 Wednesday...July 13  
684 Saturday...July 16  
685 Wednesday...July 20  
686 Saturday...July 23  
687 Wednesday...July 27  
688 Saturday...July 30  
689 Wednesday...Aug. 3  
690 Saturday...Aug. 6  
691 Wednesday...Aug. 10  
692 Saturday...Aug. 13  
693 Wednesday...Aug. 17  
694 Saturday...Aug. 20  
695 Wednesday...Aug. 24

### Fox Movietone

86 Saturday...July 9  
87 Wednesday...July 13  
88 Saturday...July 16  
89 Wednesday...July 20  
90 Saturday...July 23  
91 Wednesday...July 27  
92 Saturday...July 30  
93 Wednesday...Aug. 3  
94 Saturday...Aug. 6  
95 Wednesday...Aug. 10  
96 Saturday...Aug. 13  
97 Wednesday...Aug. 17  
98 Saturday...Aug. 20  
99 Wednesday...Aug. 24

### Paramount News

97 Saturday...July 9  
98 Wednesday...July 13  
99 Saturday...July 16  
100 Wednesday...July 20  
101 Saturday...July 23  
102 Wednesday...July 27  
103 Saturday...July 30  
104 Wednesday...Aug. 3  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### 1938-39 Season

1 Saturday...Aug. 6  
2 Wednesday...Aug. 10  
3 Saturday...Aug. 13  
4 Wednesday...Aug. 17  
5 Saturday...Aug. 20  
6 Wednesday...Aug. 24

### Metrotone News

284 Saturday...July 9  
285 Wednesday...July 13  
286 Saturday...July 16  
287 Wednesday...July 20  
288 Saturday...July 23  
289 Wednesday...July 27  
290 Saturday...July 30  
291 Wednesday...Aug. 3  
292 Saturday...Aug. 6  
293 Wednesday...Aug. 10  
294 Saturday...Aug. 13  
295 Wednesday...Aug. 17  
296 Saturday...Aug. 20  
297 Wednesday...Aug. 24

### Pathe News

851101 Sat. (O.)...July 9  
852102 Wed. (E.)...July 13  
851103 Sat. (O.)...July 16  
852104 Wed. (E.)...July 20  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### 1938-39 Season

95101 Sat. (O.)...July 23  
95202 Wed. (E.)...July 27  
95103 Sat. (O.)...July 30  
95204 Wed. (E.)...Aug. 3  
95105 Sat. (O.)...Aug. 6  
95206 Wed. (E.)...Aug. 10  
95107 Sat. (O.)...Aug. 13  
95208 Wed. (E.)...Aug. 17  
95109 Sat. (O.)...Aug. 20  
95210 Wed. (E.)...Aug. 24



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1938

No. 28

### A PLEA ON BEHALF OF INDEPENDENT CIRCUIT MANAGERS

For some time, HARRISON'S REPORTS has been receiving a number of complaints from various circuit managers. Invariably, these complaints are from men now associated with independent circuits.

In the interest of promoting a better understanding and a guide for future reference for the good of the industry, we quote intact a letter from a manager of a circuit theatre received by this paper:

"Various reports emanating from the field tell a tragic story of receding grosses. Independent and circuit operators everywhere lament the dear departed lush days of prosperity in their individual establishments. Many causes have been brought forth, each in varying degrees responsible for lethargic pulsations of their box-offices.

"Conditions being what they are, one wonders what can be done to improve or rather increase grosses, rouse the public from their apathy, direct the public once more to seek relaxation and respite from their material woes in an atmosphere of make-believe in our beautiful picture palaces.

"Productions now being released nationally are in general of pretty good calibre. Every studio in Hollywood seems to be striving to combat the general decline in box office receipts by releasing their best product, available at a time when it is vitally necessary to keep doors open.

"Let us concede for a moment that there is a slump in attendance, nationally; further that the 'dog' days of the summer are with us. But, were we not up against the same problems last year, the year before, and every summer; what happened then? Were exhibitors, circuit and independent managers any different then than now? Did they possess the vital spark, the illusive thing called showmanship then, and not now? Where did it go to?

"The majority of men, managers with the responsibility of putting over their individual situations, are the same today as in former years. What has happened to them? The desire to create a will amongst their patrons to attend theatres has gone . . . WHY? There must be a reason.

"Circuits, their methods of operation, to a great extent, are primarily the cause of laxity amongst their employees, in failing to use every ounce of showmanship in their individual make-up. The initiative to do things, is gone. To quote another circuit manager, 'how in the world can I sell my attractions when my supervisor is obsessed with the thought of cutting expenses on every hand, and when a big picture coming my way is discussed, gets very magnanimous and allows me two dollars for a herald to let my patrons know the picture is here. If I can't promote the advertising cost of my

campaign from the local merchants, I have to let it go by. Frankly, I'm fed up, it's vacation time, that is for everyone but me. My boss doesn't believe in time off for his men, claims we don't overwork ourselves and consequently are not entitled to any time for relaxation. What does he want us to do, dig ditches to prove we do earn our keep? I'm human, although I am in this crazy business. I would like to become acquainted with my family. Naturally I'm bitter toward the whole set-up and perhaps when exploitation opportunities present themselves, I go out after them, but truthfully my heart is not in it.'

"The writer holds no brief for a man that will not assume his moral responsibility in protecting his employer's investment at every opportunity. However, let us view it from the manager's point of view.

"Red Kann brings forth a communication from, as he puts it, 'a man who has been around for a good many years.' This observer of Kann's claims 'The so-called managers are really glorified janitors and there isn't a showman in fifty among them.'

"The fault is laid directly upon the doorsteps of chain operation. Chain operation has transformed once thriving showmen into automatons, performing the arduous task of making out a time schedule; they are not given credit for any higher intelligence than to follow the dictates of a guiding genius sitting in luxurious offices, miles away from the scene of operation. This 'guiding genius' believes he can, miles away, feel the pulse of the local situation and correctly gauge the reactions, with a minimum of help from the 'office boy,' as managers are often called.

"Circuits are in constant search of man-power, and the dissipation of the man-power in the ranks of our leading major and independent circuits is nothing short of criminal. Napoleon was a great general, but without smart officers and man-power, what could he do? Circuit operators on a whole have set themselves up as minor editions of Napoleon . . . deigning to consider suggestions introduced by their 'inferiors' (?) in the field. There was a time in the not too distant past when a manager in the field assumed full responsibility for the operation of his house. It was his to say as to policy, booking and selling of his attractions. He had to put over his situation or else, and was compensated accordingly—a substantial salary, extra compensation in the form of a bonus, or a profit-sharing agreement, whereby the manager had a semblance of security and a vital interest in seeing that his operation was profitable. He chiseled and connived in every conceivable fashion to bring his operation costs to a minimum, for he felt that he was part of

(Continued on last page)



### **"Fast Company" with Melvyn Douglas, Florence Rice and Claire Dodd**

(MGM, July 8; time, 74 min.)

A fast-moving murder-mystery melodrama, with excellent comedy. The comedy is so well blended in with the story that it does not lessen the melodramatic angle; besides being amused, one is held in suspense throughout, until the mystery is solved. Not only are many of the situations comical, but the dialogue is fresh and amusing; and the leading parts are played by Melvyn Douglas and Florence Rice with just enough flippancy to make them interesting and sympathetic characters:—

Since his rare-book business was in poor shape, Douglas does a little sleuthing on the side; that is, he recovers stolen rare books and collects reward money from insurance companies. He and his wife (Florence Rice) had taken an interest in Mary Howard, whose father (George Zucco), owner of one of the largest rare-book establishments, was opposing her marriage to Shepperd Strudwick, whom he had framed and sent to prison. When Zucco is found murdered, the police naturally suspect Strudwick, who had recently been released. But Douglas and Miss Rice feel that Strudwick was innocent and set out to prove it. Douglas discovers that Zucco had been carrying on a racket with stolen books, and that his secretary (Claire Dodd) had been in on the deals. By playing up to Miss Dodd, he wins her confidence and finds out many things he had to know. Louis Calhern, Zucco's partner in crime, attempts to kill Douglas. Eventually Douglas forces a confession from Miss Dodd that she had killed Zucco, and gets enough evidence to put Calhern behind the bars. At the same time, he uncovers the hiding place of the books Strudwick had been accused of stealing. In that way he clears the boy's name, leaving the way clear for him to marry Miss Howard. Miss Rice, who had helped her husband, is happy when the case is finished, for she had been worrying about her husband's safety.

Marco Page wrote the story, and he and Harold Tarshis, the screen play; Edward Buzzell directed it, and Frederick Stephani produced it. In the cast are Nat Pendleton, Douglass Dumbrille, and others.

Not for children. Class B.

### **"We're Going to Be Rich" with Gracie Fields, Victor McLaglen and Brian Donlevy**

(20th Century-Fox, July 8; time, 78 min.)

This comedy-melodrama with music, produced in England, is entertainment primarily for that country, for Gracie Fields is a great favorite there. She is not known well enough in the United States to attract the masses, although she has a charming personality and can put a song over very well. The picture is, at best, just fair entertainment; as a matter of fact, the production values are superior to the story, which is pretty trite. The action is somewhat slow, most of the excitement being concentrated in the closing scenes where McLaglen engages in a boxing bout with a husky opponent. These scenes are colorful since they depict an interesting era in the gold rush days at Cape Town:—

Miss Fields, a music-hall singer, married to McLaglen, looks forward to the day when she could return to England with her motherless nephew, so as to put him in a good school. Again she is disappointed, for she finds out that McLaglen had invested all her savings in a gold mine at Cape Town. When they arrive there things turn out just as she had expected—gullible McLaglen had again been duped. She takes a job as a singer at the dance hall owned by Yankee Brian Donlevy, who falls in love with her. She makes a big hit with the patrons and the money starts rolling in again; but McLaglen, jealous of Donlevy, goes off on a drunken spree. This brings about a separation between him and his wife. Donlevy, hoping to humiliate McLaglen, arranges a bout between him and a brutal fighter. During the bout, a rumor gets about that somebody had struck gold, and so everybody leaves in a rush, just as McLaglen is knocked out. Miss Fields, knowing that McLaglen would be happier going after gold than returning to England, decides to go to the gold rush with him; they are happily reconciled.

James Edward Grant wrote the story, and Sam Hellman and Rohama Siegel, the screen play; Monty Banks directed it, and Samuel G. Engel produced it. In the cast are Coral Browne, Ted Smith, Gus McNaughton, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Reformatory" with Jack Holt, Bobby Jordan and Frankie Darro**

(Columbia, July 21; time, 61 min.)

Another one in the cycle of reform school dramas, "Reformatory" is nevertheless fairly good program entertainment. The story is patterned along familiar lines, with typical comedy sequences brought about by the tough actions and wisecracks of the inmates. Practically all the action takes place at the reformatory, with scenes showing the mistreatment the boys receive at the hands of the cruel guards. The spectator's sympathy is awakened by the hero's efforts to rehabilitate the young boys under his care. There is no romantic interest:—

When several boys from a well-known reform school try to escape, during which one of them is killed, the Governor of the state is determined to put a competent man in charge. He selects Jack Holt, who had been assistant warden at a tough prison. Holt finds conditions deplorable—the food was bad, the boys not only received corporeal punishment, but lived amid squalid surroundings. He changes all these conditions, first discharging all the guards, including Ward Bond, the head guard. Under his influence, the boys change for the better, take an interest in better things, and even have their own honor system. But Bond is determined to oust Holt. By falsifying records, he gets Frankie Darro, a tough young man, put in the school; Darro's instructions were to cause trouble. Darro escapes with one of the boys; but Bobby Jordan, who idolized Holt, rushes after them to bring them back. Darro drowns, and Jordan is hurt. The other boy (Tommy Bupp) is caught and, after evading the truth, finally confesses; his testimony clears Holt and involves Bond. Holt continues at his job.

Gordon Rigby wrote the original story and screen play; Lewis D. Collins directed it. In the cast are Charlotte Wynters, Grant Mitchell, Sheila Bromley, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"My Bill" with Kay Francis and Dickie Moore**

(First National, July 16; time, 63½ min.)

If it weren't for the excellent performance given by Dickie Moore, this drama, interspersed with comedy, would be a flop. The story is silly; and, since it is developed by dialogue instead of by action, it is tiresome as well. Miss Francis is miscast in the mother part; first, she seems pretty young to be the mother of Anita Louise and, secondly, she does not bring realism to the role. As for the children, three of them show such despicable traits that the spectator feels that anything the mother does for them is a waste of time. Dickie is outstanding; his characterization is a loveable one, even though he is made to speak lines that seem beyond his years. The romantic interest is kept in the background:—

Miss Francis, widow and mother of four children (Miss Louise, Dickie, Bonita Granville, and Bobby Jordan), finds herself, because of poor business sense and extravagance, penniless; she refuses to burden her children with her worries. She goes to John Litel, bank president, for a loan. No sooner does she get the money, than she buys expensive clothes for her children and flowers for the house; she also pays some bills. She receives a visit from Elisabeth Risdon, her sister-in-law; Miss Risdon, in the presence of the children, insults Miss Francis and informs them of their mother's financial state. The three older children leave home to go to live with their aunt, who promised them security. Dickie stays with his mother; he is disgusted with his brother and sisters. Dickie becomes heir to the fortune of an old wealthy woman, who, shortly before her death, had become acquainted with and loved Dickie. In the meantime, the three children had realized the error of their ways and had returned. The aunt tries to tell them that Dickie was not their real brother, that Litel was really his father; but they refuse to believe her and order her out. Litel then tells the children how unhappy their mother had been with her husband, that having known of Litel's love for her, he had unjustly accused her of being unfaithful. The children are overjoyed when Miss Francis tells them she would marry Litel.

Tom Barry wrote the story, and Vincent Sherman and Robertson White, the screen play; John Farrow directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Maurice Murphy, Helena Evans, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"South Riding" with Edna Best  
and Ralph Richardson**

(United Artists, July 1; time, 84 min.)

A good adult class-audience picture; it should do well in small art theatres. The unusual story is developed brilliantly; and the performances are excellent. The settings and characters are typically British, but audiences that like something different will not find this objectionable, so absorbing is the story. Although the picture opens on a local political issue, it gradually develops into a strong human-interest drama centering around the different characters involved in the political matters:—

The members of the South Riding County Council are contemplating a housing project for the poor people who lived in the shacks; their hope was to demolish these shacks. Astell, an idealist, is the leader in the fight; his opponent is Ralph Richardson, well-known land owner, who was in financial difficulties owing to the great expense involved in keeping his wife in an expensive mental home; this was the great sorrow of his life. He feared that his young daughter (Ann Todd), who showed signs of having a fierce temper, might go the way of her mother. To the county comes Edna Best, as head-mistress of the high school; at first she and Richardson are antagonistic towards each other; but when they get to understand each other they fall in love. Richardson sends his daughter to Miss Best's school. In the meantime, two conniving members of the Council (Edmund Gwenn and Milton Rosmer) take an option on certain waste land, hoping to induce the Council to buy that land for the housing project. Richardson becomes despondent, and decides to kill himself, feeling that his insurance would cover his wife's and daughter's needs; but Miss Best prevents him from doing this. She accidentally learns the truth about the scheming council members and discloses the facts to Richardson. At the Council meeting, where the housing proposal was to be acted upon, Richardson forces Gwenn to confess. He then makes a gratuitous offer of part of his own lands for the housing project, which is accepted. Richardson's wife dies; this leaves the way clear for him to marry Miss Best.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Winifred Holtby; Ian Dalrymple wrote the screen play, Victor Saville directed it, and Alexander Korda produced it. In the cast are Marie Lohr, Edward Lexy, Josephine Wilson, and others.

Not for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Panamint's Bad Man" with Smith Ballew  
and Evelyn Daw**

(20th Century-Fox, July 8; time, 59 min.)

A good Western; it has what the fans want—plentiful action, fast riding and fist fights. And in addition, it has good comedy and well-rendered musical interpolations. The story is developed according to formula; nevertheless, it holds one in suspense. Particularly exciting is the second half, where the hero poses as a bandit in order to get in with a gang that had been terrorizing the countryside. The romance is pleasant:—

Smith Ballew, a U. S. Deputy, is assigned to the job of getting the crooks that were robbing the Wells Fargo express coaches. He suspects Noah Beery, the proprietor of a casino, as the leader of the gang. When Stanley Fields, a notorious bandit from Texas, is arrested and locked up, Ballew decides to use his name as a means of getting in with the gang. His plan works and he finds out that his suspicions about Beery were correct. But Fields escapes from jail; Ballew is, therefore, compelled to lead Fields to believe that if they worked together they could depose Beery and take over his gang. Ballew asks Evelyn Daw, a singer in Beery's casino, to rush to the Marshal and inform him where the next holdup was to be. The posse arrives in time to round up the gang. Fields is amazed to find out that he had been working on the side of the law; he becomes a deputy marshal, but actually feels it is a disgrace to give up banditry. Ballew and Miss Daw marry.

Edmond Kelso and Lindsley Parsons wrote the story, and Luci Ward and Charles Arthur Powell, the screen play; Ray Taylor directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. In the cast are Harry Woods, Pat O'Brien, Armand Wright, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Passport Husband" with Stuart Erwin,  
Pauline Moore and Joan Woodbury**

(20th Century-Fox, July 15; time, 67 min.)

A fairly good program comedy. It is a burlesque gangster story, with Stuart Erwin as the innocent foil of the gangsters. The story, of course, does not make much sense; but that is immaterial since the individual situations are comical; in addition, the action is fast-moving. Stuart Erwin is good in the part of the timid soul, who innocently becomes involved with the gangsters; the closing scenes, in which he asserts himself and frees himself of the gangsters, should provoke hearty laughter. A night club scene provides the means for some music:—

Erwin, a timid and rather stupid bus boy at a fashionable night club, adores Joan Woodbury, a dancer, whose boy friend was Douglas Fowley, owner of the club. Harold Huber, a rival gangster, also in love with Miss Woodbury, gives the police information to the effect that Fowley was not a citizen; so when Fowley is deported, Huber appropriates Miss Woodbury for himself. His lawyer informs him, however, that Miss Woodbury would probably be deported next; the only thing that could save her was marriage to a respectable citizen. So they pick on Erwin as the husband; immediately after the ceremony Miss Woodbury goes off with Huber. Pauline Moore, cigarette girl at the cafe, who loved Erwin, enlightens him; he is furious and decides to annul the marriage. But complications set in when Erwin inherits a million dollars and a pin-game business; Miss Woodbury wants the money and Huber and Fowley's gang want control of the pin-game business. But Erwin, who did not believe in gambling, had decided to discontinue the business. The rival gangs make life miserable and dangerous for Erwin. Through a ruse, he finally rounds them up, turning them over to the police. Miss Moore promises to marry him as soon as his marriage is annulled.

Hilda Stone wrote the story, and Karen DeWolf and Robert Chapin, the screen play; James Tynling directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Edward S. Brophy, Robert Lowery, and Lon Chaney, Jr.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Tropic Holiday" with Martha Raye,  
Bob Burns, Dorothy Lamour  
and Ray Milland**

(Paramount, July 22; time, 78 min.)

Despite a silly story, this comedy with music has the ingredients for mass appeal. The most outstanding feature is the music, particularly the Mexican tunes as sung by Tito Guizar and other natives. Martha Raye and Bob Burns are able to overcome the trite material and provoke laughter on many occasions. The funniest situation is that in which Miss Raye decides to go in for bullfighting; the methods she employs to get away from the bull are extremely amusing. Otherwise, the picture goes in for the routine romance of the native girl and the American boy, with misunderstandings, complications in the person of a motion picture siren, and eventual reconciliation:—

Ray Milland, a writer, who had been sent to Mexico by his studio to write a love story for leading lady Binnie Barnes, Milland's fiancée, finds that he is without ideas; his ever-faithful secretary (Miss Raye) tries to talk him into forgetting Miss Barnes. Things change when Milland becomes aware of Dorothy Lamour, daughter of the proprietor of the cafe-hotel in which he was stopping; through her he gets to understand her people and real love, and is able to write. But Miss Barnes, by reading the material he had sent in, becomes suspicious and flies down to see him. In the meantime, Bob Burns, Miss Raye's erstwhile suitor, arrives in Mexico to claim Miss Raye as his bride; but Miss Raye had become enamored of Guizar. In order to show off in front of Guizar, she decides to become a bull-fighter; but when the bull becomes vicious and Burns runs in to her rescue, she realizes Burns was a hero and so gives her love to him. By a ruse, Burns is able to frighten Miss Barnes away; this leaves the way clear for Milland and Miss Lamour to marry.

Don Hartman and Frank Butler wrote the story, and they and John C. Mofitt and Duke Atteberry, the screen play; Theodore Reed directed it, and Arthur Hornblow, Jr., produced it. In the cast are Elvira Rios, Roberto Soto, Pepito, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



that operation, and devoted himself entirely to making that a successful operation in every respect.

"With the advent of circuits, this all went by the wayside. No longer does a manager have a voice in the bookings. He dare not criticize the bookings or policy for fear of reprisals, for most likely a close relative of the big boss has so ordained it. All he knows is what he reads in a weekly letter.

"Let us correct the existing evils now prevailing in the exhibition end of our great industry. Major circuits, as well as independent chains, should take heed of the blight they have brought upon themselves. There is a way to bring this business back from the lips of the yawning gorge that threatens to engulf us. To a certain extent, it will solve many of our minute problems.

"Our industry should dedicate itself to the task of promoting goodwill via humane conditions and understanding amongst its workers—face the unvarnished truth and realize the fact that operating heads of the exhibition end of this great industry are as much to blame for declining grosses as are general conditions.

"An understanding is necessary of the problems confronting the men in the field, who are betwixt the devil and the deep blue sea. Decentralize operations to give these men, who are charged with success or failure, a chance to exert the showmanship and ingenuity they do possess; then, and only then, the circuits will overcome the box office depression within the scope of human capabilities. Give the manager the incentive to go out and do things, to create ideas to lift his box-office from the doldrums it is now floundering in.

"At the present time, the man-power is wasted. Valuable story properties are being rushed into production. National advertising campaigns by the producers are being formulated. These should be taken advantage of, when the pictures reach the screen. Are they?

"Tremendous effort and diligent thought on the part of the producers goes for naught when the productions reach the circuits. As far as they are concerned, it is all just 'the run of the mill' product. As one leading independent circuit operator was heard to observe, when one of his managers decried the fact that his patrons were staying away in droves, due to the policy of the circuit, 'it is your job to educate your patrons to conform with our ideas as to the running of your show, and to come in when you want them to.' This circuit operator was referring to the time of day. The manager was upset over the fact that his patrons were complaining that if they came after 7:45 P.M. or 8 P.M., they could not see a complete show. This circuit manager was trying to educate his patrons, to rush through their dinner and hurry to see his show.

"Perhaps I have been under a misapprehension, but it has always been my belief that this industry on the whole catered to the general public. Now this officious individual comes along to point out my error, destroying the illusion I had built up in that direction. Since when did the general public pay for the privilege of being mistreated?

"This disillusioned person had always been under the impression that service staffs were trained to a high note of efficiency in promoting good-will. Service staffs, from the manager down, went out of their way to make their patrons as comfortable as possible, so that they would look upon the theatre as a source of relaxation and come again.

"I venture to state that the above circuit operator is an isolated case in that respect. However true it may be, still and all, every possible angle should be thoroughly explored to remove all bars from the return of box-office activity and resultant prosperity. Yet, the circuit operator follows the same principle in regards to his man-power, denying them every privilege to which they are rightfully entitled. He will not take into consideration the fact, and it is quite obvious, that the men are not working with him and are on a virtual sit-down strike as far as selling attractions go. They follow routine surface duties and that's about all.

"The circuit operator demands everything from his men, and gives nothing in return. True, he is paying them a salary each and every week and is entitled thereby to exact from them honest effort. It cannot, however, be a one-sided deal. An employer must reciprocate, if not in a material way, then by other means. To bring it out more forcefully, I quote a query from one manager in a well known independent circuit, 'How can my boss honestly expect a man to strive for better business, use his intelligence and ingenuity, when he knows that he will be in a stuffy theatre all summer, without a day off? Many people look forward to this time of the year for a chance to relax and store away a few precious rays of sun within their bodies, but for me, I can only look forward to a very hot summer, in a hotter theatre. No vacation, no days off. It's not fair.'

"Obviously, the above manager's superiors are inviting the labor unions to come in and organize their men. In these enlightened times, it staggers the imagination to think that there still are people, working on the average of between twelve and fourteen hours a day, seven days a week. A machine, which is relied upon to turn out a certain amount of work, is carefully guarded. Systematically, it is taken apart, oiled, cleaned, and repairs made to prevent a breakdown. The human mind and body is, after all, but a machine which needs, and demands the same consideration. Without a chance of rejuvenation, through a little leisure, the body and mind will cease to function, to the detriment of whatever enterprise in which it may be engaged.

"It is not within our province to say, yet it is foolhardy to attempt to have managers devote, without deviation, their entire mind and body to their work, without allowing for physical relaxation.

"I reiterate, remedy conditions in the field by permitting managers to have a voice in the booking of the attractions, to enable local situations and problems to be taken into consideration. Circuits should realize that standard operating policies cannot and will not cover all operating units and that there is a necessity for flexible policies. Give the men in the field credit for some intelligence, or else get men in whom they have faith. Stop destroying the greatest asset we have, our manpower, and build up the morale of the men to a point where this industry will be invincible. Humane treatment and, again I say, understanding, will accomplish this. Business on the whole can prosper only in relation to the welfare of the workers as a whole.

"It is not my contention that these are the sole causes of the box-office depression we are now up against, but they are an irradicable contributory factor."



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## HARMFUL PUBLICITY

Inane, senseless statements have a habit of cropping up in Hollywood. This spot is constantly watched, by everyone — everywhere. Newshawks are assembled there representing newspapers, periodicals, and what not, ready at a moment's notice to swoop down like vultures at a kill, when executives of the film business, especially producers, start making statements.

These executives are well aware of the fact that any statement they may make regarding the quality of motion pictures, especially when it tends to disparage the rest of the industry, will receive instant and wide attention. It is, therefore, no little wonder that they have not as yet learned to keep silent. They should have come to realize by now that rash statements prove detrimental to the film business in general, and to the box offices in particular.

The ultimate sufferer is the exhibitor. He has already contracted for pictures that are being panned by other producers, in many cases paying a higher rental than the picture deserves. He has no means of fighting back these attacks on his box office, for when the local papers state and comment editorially that the pictures are no good, giving big moguls in Hollywood themselves as this source of the information, he can do nothing about it. And his box office suffers.

If the pictures are as bad as they are claimed to be, how is it that they are not sold to the exhibitor at a reduced rental? In that way, he can come close to breaking even on the deal.

The recent statement of Harry M. Warner about "hoarding" has created a furore within and without our industry. Newspaper editors have picked up where he left off and did not mince words. They failed, however, to tell the public that it was strictly a publicity stunt, which should have been confined within the borders of the motion picture industry. The tragedy of it is the fact that the editors have taken the statement at its face value, and have practically advised people to stay away from the motion picture theatres during the summer months, seeking entertainment elsewhere. "Why waste time going to a movie, when the producers themselves are saving the good pictures until Fall," is the way they practically put it.

If Harry M. Warner's press department head was clever in concocting the "hoarding" idea, with the thought of merely getting publicity, he has succeeded. It was a clever idea and has brought his company much publicity, but it is the sort of publicity that has reacted against the entire motion picture industry.

We pause for a moment to wonder how Major Albert Warner felt when, while in Washington recently in company with Will Hays and representatives of the other major companies, during their conference with President Roosevelt, the President broached the subject of a rumor that there was a hoarding of product, and if there was any truth in it.

In betting circles, they have a quaint way of dealing with people who like to talk too much — "put up, or shut up." So far Warner Brothers have not "put up." Their pictures on the whole have not been anything to talk about. They have been below par as far as entertainment and box-office values go. Consequently, they should either "deliver," or keep quiet.

## CHICAGO INDEPENDENTS DEMAND NEW DEAL

The independent theatre owners of the Chicago zone are up in arms again over the zoning and clearance schedule now in effect in that city. Talks of compromise and corrections of the existing unfair practices have been going on for some time, but nothing has been done so far to alter the situation.

Balaban & Katz, the predominating circuit in Chicago, is strongly in favor of dual bills and is getting a ten-week clearance over the independents. Eddie Silverman, who heads the Essaness circuit, leading independent, accompanied by the late Aaron Saperstein, were in New York to seek a compromise with Balaban & Katz. And the tentative agreement reached was that B. & K. would shorten the clearance to five weeks if the independents who would get the concession would play single features. Those retaining double features would still be stuck with a ten-week protection.

This plan was decided upon to prevent a law suit by the independents on their demand for a reduction and earlier playing time.

I wonder whether entering into such an agreement would not be the very thing the B. & K. circuit is trying to avoid—collusion! Wouldn't that give the independent distributors the right to bring suit for conspiracy? It has been repeatedly held by the courts that private agreements affecting the interests of third parties, not represented in the agreement, were illegal. Would not an action of that kind come under the court's ruling?

It is about time that the big circuits learned that independents, distributors as well as exhibitors, have the right to existence without restraint of any kind.



### **"I'll Give a Million" with Warner Baxter and Marjorie Weaver**

(20th Century-Fox, July 22; time, 74 min.)

A good comedy. The story is simple but novel. It is a little slow in getting started, but as the plot develops, the action becomes faster and the situations more comical. Most of the laughs are provoked when the inhabitants of a small town, having heard that a millionaire was in their midst disguised as a hobo, whose intention it was to give one million francs to the person who would be kind to him without thought of remuneration, proceed to entertain every tramp they find. The closing scenes in which the hero finds it difficult to convince the authorities that he was the millionaire are exciting as well as comical. The romance is charming:—

Warner Baxter, a millionaire, is depressed at the thought that he had no real friends. He jumps off his yacht to rescue a drowning man (Peter Lorre); but since the Captain had not seen him jump, the yacht continues on without him. Lorre, a half-witted tramp, invites Baxter to spend the night with him in his cave hideout. Lorre is amazed when Baxter tells him he was a millionaire and that he would give a million francs to the person who would show real kindness without thought of monetary returns. When Lorre awakens in the morning, he finds that Baxter had already left, taking with him the tramp's clothes and leaving in its place his evening suit, with the pockets filled with money. Lorre relates his experiences to a newspaper reporter, who prints the story, which creates a stir in town. Tramps are wine and dined, and are given free admission to theatres, cafes, and homes. In the meantime, Baxter meets and falls in love with Miss Weaver, who worked in a circus with her uncle (Jean Hersholt). Without suspecting that Baxter was the millionaire, she helps him in every way possible. At last the tramp problem becomes too much for the police and Lorre is ordered to pick out the millionaire; fearing that he would be arrested if he didn't choose some one, he picks hobo John Carradine. The officials take Carradine to the best hotel, where he promptly proceeds to steal everything in sight. Finally Baxter convinces the authorities that he was the millionaire. Miss Weaver, feeling she had been made a fool of, is at first annoyed; but she relents and marries Baxter.

Cesare Zazzattini and Giaci Mondaini wrote the story, and Boris Ingster and Milton Sperling, the screen play; Walter Lang directed it, and Kenneth Macgowan produced it. In the cast are J. Edward Bromberg, Lynn Bari, Fritz Feld, Sig Ruman, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Little Tough Guy" with "The Dead End" Boys, Robert Wilcox and Helen Parrish**

(Universal, July 22; time, 82½ min.)

Good. But it is so mainly because of "The Dead End" boys, whose performances are excellent; they act so naturally that they make a somewhat far-fetched plot seem plausible. The first half concentrates mostly on comedy, which is caused by the wisecracks and actions of the boys; they provoke hearty laughter. But the second half goes melodramatic and is somewhat unpleasant because of the fact that the boys drift into crime. The scene showing two of the boys with guns in their hands trying to fight it out with the police, during which one of them is killed, is pretty strong; but it holds the spectator in tense suspense. The point of the story is that young boys drift into crime mostly because of their surroundings and upbringing. The romance is developed with sympathy:—

Billy Halop suffers considerably when his father is arrested and tried for a murder which he had committed unintentionally during a strike; when his father is convicted and sentenced to the electric chair, he feels that he had been framed by the lawyers. His sister (Helen Parrish) pleads with him to have patience, assuring him that she and her fiancé (Robert Wilcox) were doing all they could. In spite of the fact that her mother (Marjorie Main) was selfish and was the cause of her father's trouble, Miss Parrish cannot desert her. When her father is finally electrocuted, Miss Parrish breaks her engagement, insisting that she did not want to drag Wilcox down. They move to a cheap neighborhood, where Halop drifts in with a tough gang; he becomes their leader. They become acquainted with wealthy, spoiled Jackie Searl, who, wanting some excitement,

induces them to enter into a life of crime, he to be their brains. They commit petty thefts and the money starts rolling in; Halop continues only because he wanted to help his mother and sister. But Searl, angry at the way the boys treated him, squeals and brings the police to a motion picture theatre where the boys were planning a holdup. Halop and Huntz Hall escape and hide in a store; but the police find them. Both boys have guns; the police fire and Hall is killed. Miss Parrish bravely walks to her brother and induces him to give up. The boys, including Searl, are all sent to a training school, where, under the proper influence, they develop for the better.

Brenda Weisberg wrote the story, and she and Gilson Brown, the screen play; Harold Young directed it, and Ken Goldsmith produced it. In the cast are Peggy Stewart, and others.

Although the story has a moral, it is pretty strong fare for children and adolescents. More suitable for adults. Class B.

### **"Algiers" with Charles Boyer, Sigrid Gurie and Hedy Lamarr**

(United Art. [1938-39], July 22; time, 95 min.)

This melodrama, revolving around a crook whose morale is broken by confinement in a strange land away from the things he loved, is interesting as a psychological study. But as entertainment, it is only fair, for the action is slow. Its appeal should, therefore, be directed more to class audiences than to the masses. The story lacks human appeal; it is difficult to sympathize with a crook, particularly so in this case, for he does not repent his misdeeds. There are other features that are unpleasant, such as a cold-blooded murder; as a matter of fact, not one character stands out as being worthy of the spectator's sympathy. And, although the ending is inevitable, it might prove distressing to some spectators, for it leaves one restless:—

Charles Boyer, noted jewel thief, who had been forced to flee from Paris in order to avoid arrest, lives in Algiers, in an impenetrable section inhabited by crooks. He is adored by Sigrid Gurie, an Algerian; but she realizes he just tolerates her. Joseph Calleia, a detective, who sees Boyer every day and looks forward to the day when he could lure him from that section so that he could arrest him, is sure that Boyer's spirit will break in time. And this comes about sooner than Calleia had expected. Hedy Lamarr, a beautiful Parisian girl, touring the quarters with friends, is attracted to Boyer; they fall in love. She sneaks away from her fiancé each day to see him. Through her, he realizes all that he was missing—how he really loved Paris; he becomes depressed. Led to believe that Boyer had been killed, Miss Lamarr agrees to return to Paris. Boyer sneaks out of the quarters and buys a ticket on the same steamer. But Miss Gurie, who could not bear to have Boyer leave her, informs the police. They take him off the boat; one of the detectives, thinking Boyer was trying to escape when he ran forward to shout to Miss Lamarr, whom he had seen, shoots him; Boyer dies.

Det. Ashelbe wrote the story, and John Howard Lawson, the screen play; John Cromwell directed it, and Walter Wanger produced it. In the cast are Alan Hale, Gene Lockhart, Johnny Downs, Stanley Fields, and others.

Not for children. Adult fare. Class B.

### **"Penrod's Double Trouble" with the Mauch Twins, Dick Purcell and Gene Lockhart**

(First National, July 30; time, 60 min.)

This is good entertainment for the youngsters. It is a continuation of the Penrod series, but more exciting than the previous ones. The comedy, brought about by the actions of Penrod and his pals, is of the familiar variety, but it, nevertheless, provokes laughter. The excitement this time is caused by the disappearance of Penrod. One amusing situation is that in which the young boys and their girl friends do the Big Apple:—

When his father (Gene Lockhart) locks him in his room because of a prank he and the boys had played on Rodney, the banker's son, Penrod feels he was being mistreated and so sneaks out to go to the circus. But his father follows him and when Penrod sees him, he hides in a balloon. The balloon is suddenly let loose by a former parachute jumper (Dick Purcell), who had been discharged; he is the only



one who sees Penrod in the basket but has no way of stopping it. When Penrod does not show up, his parents are frantic. His father mortgages his home in order to get enough money together for a reward. Penrod's picture is published in the newspapers. This is seen by a small-time carnival man (Hugh O'Connell), whose assistant (the other Mauch boy) was the image of the missing boy. His plan was to pass his boy off as Penrod and collect the money. The plan works for a time, until Penrod returns. The crook, in company with the parachute jumper, kidnaps the real Penrod and leaves him in an abandoned farm; his plan was to kill Penrod. But the carnival boy, feeling sorry for Penrod's parents, rounds up Penrod's gang; they rescue Penrod. The crooks are exposed and Penrod is returned safely to his parents.

Booth Tarkington wrote the story, and Crane Wilbur, the screen play; Lewis Seiler directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Kathleen Lockhart, Charles Halton, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse" with Edward G. Robinson, Claire Trevor and Humphrey Bogart**

(First National, July 30; time, 86 min.)

This gangster melodrama, interspersed with comedy, has an unusual twist and is, for the most part, exciting fare. But for a picture of its type, the characters indulge in too much talk; as a matter of fact, the first half is slow because of this fact. The action is crowded into the second half, during which the spectator is held in suspense. The most exciting scenes are those in which the gangsters strip a warehouse of all the furs stored there. In spite of the fact that the hero's association with the criminals is explained as being in the interests of scientific research work, his actions are none the less far from edifying; the most unpleasant sight is that in which he poisons the villain, who had become a problem to him. The picture ends on a high note of comedy:—

Edward G. Robinson, a respected, well-known surgeon, is extremely interested in criminology. In order to get the reaction to stealing, he actually commits thefts himself; but what he wanted was to get the reaction of real crooks. Using the stolen jewels as a means of getting in with a gang, Robinson becomes acquainted with Claire Trevor, a fence for stolen goods; through her he meets the gang and becomes their leader, without revealing his identity. He guides them through brilliant robberies, his only demand being that they undergo an examination at any time he wanted it; the only one who voices an objection is Humphrey Bogart, a tough gangster, who was jealous of Miss Trevor's obvious affection for Robinson. After a daring fur robbery, Robinson takes leave of the gang, to go back to his normal life. But Bogart, who had found out who he was, follows him to his office, and, at the point of a gun, forces Robinson to turn over the data he had collected; he informs him that, unless he continued working with the gang, taking orders from him, he would kill him. Robinson, realizing that all his work would go for naught, gives Bogart a drink in which he puts poison. Bogart dies, and Robinson is arrested. At the trial, Robinson insists on telling the truth; the jury finds him innocent on the ground, that, when a man gives such testimony against himself, he must be crazy.

The plot was adapted from the play by Barre Lyndon. John Wexley and John Huston wrote the screen play, Anatole Litvak directed and produced it. In the cast are Allen Jenkins, Donald Crisp, Gale Page, and others.

Unsuitable for children or adolescents. Adult fare. Class B.

### **"Shopworn Angel" with Margaret Sullavan, James Stewart and Walter Pidgeon**

(MGM, July 15; time, 84 min.)

Despite excellent performances by the three leading players, good production values, and amusing dialogue, this is only fair entertainment; it may, however, go over with women because of the romantic complications. The plot is artificial; for that reason the picture lacks dramatic power. It is difficult to sympathize with the characters; not that they are unworthy of one's sympathies—it is just that the situations in which they are placed seem so unreal, that

one's emotions are not stirred by their plight. The story takes place at the time the United States entered the World War:—

James Stewart, a young farm hand, who had enlisted in the Army and was stationed in New York, accidentally meets Margaret Sullavan, a young hard-boiled actress; he falls madly in love with her, even though she considered him just a silly youngster. She later helps Stewart out of an embarrassing situation, by pretending, in the presence of his friends, to be good friends with him. Stewart calls to see her thereafter. This annoys Walter Pidgeon, Miss Sullavan's lover, who, for the first time, shows signs of jealousy. Miss Sullavan insists that Pidgeon was the man she loved; but he warns her that her association with Stewart might put her in a difficult position. When Stewart learns that his detachment had been ordered to sail for France that night, he rushes to Miss Sullavan and pleads with her to marry him. Realizing all that she meant to him, she marries him; Pidgeon forgives her. She tells him that when Stewart returned it would be time enough to tell him the truth. Stewart is killed during an attack; Miss Sullavan receives the news with tears in her eyes, as Pidgeon comforts her. They both know that through Stewart they had learned the real meaning of love.

Dana Burnet wrote the story, and Waldo Salt, the screen play; H. C. Potter directed it, and Joseph L. Mankiewicz produced it. In the cast are Hattie McDaniel, Nat Pendleton, Alan Curtis, and others.

It is doubtful if children or adolescents will understand the relationship between Miss Sullavan and Pidgeon. Suitability, therefore, Class A.

### **"Little Miss Broadway" with Shirley Temple, George Murphy and Phyllis Brooks**

(20th Century-Fox, July 29; time, 71 min.)

Aided by an excellent cast, Shirley Temple comes through with another good picture that is sure to please her fans. She carries the main burden of entertainment, and does it better than ever; she dances excellently, with George Murphy as her partner, and sings several numbers in her own captivating style. Although the story is far-fetched and pretty weak in spots, Shirley, as ever, manages to overcome trite situations by the force of her personality. For comedy, there is Jimmy Durante, who, in his blustering manner, causes hearty laughs by his misuse of words. There are situations that touch one's emotions, particularly the scene where Shirley is taken away from her guardian. A pleasant romance is worked into the plot:—

Shirley, an orphan, is overjoyed when Edward Ellis and his daughter (Miss Brooks) take her from the orphanage to live with them in their theatrical hotel. Shirley is the pet of all the actors and actresses and she loves them all. But trouble presents itself in the form of the landlady (Edna May Oliver), whose own home adjoined that of the hotel; she was disturbed by the noise of bands at the hotel and was determined to oust Ellis. She warns Ellis that, unless he paid up \$2500 back rent, she would dispossess him. Shirley goes to see Miss Oliver, taking with her five dollars she had saved up and which she wanted to give as part payment of the rent. There she meets George Murphy, Miss Oliver's nephew, who is charmed by her simplicity; but Miss Oliver is adamant. Murphy becomes friendly with the hotel folk and is determined to help Ellis. He does this by bringing to the hotel his uncle (Donald Meek) and three of his cronies who wanted a place to practice their singing; Meek pays a year's rent in advance. With the money Ellis is able to pay the rent. But Miss Oliver, having heard that Murphy was in love with Miss Brooks, arranges for the authorities to take Shirley away, to be sent back to the orphanage; her plan then was to evict Ellis and tear down the hotel. But Murphy, who had a one-third interest in the estate, has other plans; he brings a court action to prevent Miss Oliver from doing so. She finally succumbs to Shirley's charms. This brings joy to every one, particularly to Murphy and Miss Brooks, who planned to marry.

Harry Tugend and Jack Yellen wrote the screen play, Irving Cummings directed it, and David Hempstead produced it. In the cast are George Barbier, Jane Darwell, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



## LET THE PRODUCERS PROVIDE THE PUBLIC WITH A DEPRESSION ANTIDOTE

Mr. Patrick T. Montford, the Irish humorist, publisher of the *Dublin Opinion*, Ireland's humorous journal, before leaving the United States to go back to Ireland last week, stated that laughter is an antidote for depression, war clouds, and for political disturbances.

Truer words have never been spoken, and we should do all we can to bring them to the attention of the producers, in Hollywood and elsewhere, for these have the habit of producing the most depressing pictures at a time when the economic depression hits the country the hardest. Clearly do I remember that, in the period after the market crash of 1929, they kept making the most depressing pictures imaginable. This paper dubbed those pictures "Suicide pictures," for certainly they did tend to make those who would see them feel hopeless.

There have been produced lately several depressing pictures, not of the ordinary kind, but of the kind on which more money has been spent. One out of town exhibitor told me that in his city three pictures of the same type were shown in the downtown theatres on the same week. "Can you blame the public for not patronizing picture theatres?" he asked.

The moving picture producers should realize that, in producing a large number of pictures that tend to depress those who go to see them, they injure their own interests as much as they do the interests of the exhibitors. As this paper said in 1930, 1931, and 1932, cheerful pictures put the public into a happy frame of mind; and when people are in such a frame of mind they spread cheer and happiness around them, not only with words and conduct, but also with expenditures. Under such a frame of mind, people go to the theatres more frequently, and when they do so they pass by stores and stop to do a little window-shopping. And you know what the result is—they buy things.

## STOP ENCOURAGING THE RADIO COMMENTATORS

It seems incredible that the motion picture industry should continue to tolerate a condition that would not be permitted in any other industry; the studios allow the studio privileges to the sensation-seeking radio commentators. It is unwise tolerance that allows scandal mongers to thrive when they should be driven out. The harm done by false and malicious gossip is inestimable. These sensation seekers are making things far worse than they really are.

George Fisher told the public that the Hollywood producers are distracted because the public is not going to the picture shows, and made an appeal to his hearers to write to him, giving him their reason for keeping away so that the producers may make in the pictures the necessary improvements. In other words, this commentator told the public that the pictures are now bad, and that nobody goes to see them.

Vigorous protest, by exhibitors and distributors alike, should be lodged against these radio commentators, who delight in making unneces-

sary "digs," to the studio heads in Hollywood and also to the Federal Communications Commission to prevent a recurrence of last week's act.

Studio heads who allow this form of sabotage to go by unnoticed and unchecked shirk their duties to their companies, and to the exhibitors.

## BOB SAVINI'S SINGLE REEL AROUND RUDOLPH VALENTINO

Encouraged by the success "The Sheik" and "The Son of the Sheik" have made, Bob Savini, of Astor Pictures, has got together a reel which he calls "The Life of Valentino"; it presents an interesting collection of intimate scenes depicting Valentino's life and untimely death. They present him as much a man as a screen idol of the young women at the time he was at the height of his screen career. People will not laugh at this reel the way they laugh at the two features as a result of the crude acting, for the subject is treated differently.

The picture might prove of help to the box office during the warm summer months. At any rate, exhibitors might find looking into this single reel worth while.

## A PRIVILEGE YOU DON'T ENJOY NOW BUT YOU WILL UNDER THE NEELY BILL

Because the Knights of Columbus and other Catholic organizations took an antagonistic attitude toward the Wanger picture, "Blockade," on the ground that it is "pro-loyalist Spanish propaganda," Loew's Theatres, Inc., was compelled to take an advertisement in the *Brooklyn Tablet*, a Catholic paper, in order to present to its readers and to the Catholic picture-going public in general that the Loew theatres avoid propaganda subjects, that its committee had screened this picture, and not seeing anything objectionable in it approved it, contracts being signed for it after the approval.

What this paper wishes to call your attention to is, not the antagonistic attitude of several Catholic organizations against the picture, not the fact that the Loew organization was compelled to take an advertisement in the *Brooklyn Tablet* to explain the routine work of passing a picture, but the fact that contracts for that picture were signed by the Loew theatre department only after its reviewing committee had approved it.

And yet I have exhibitors still writing me for my opinion whether the Neely Bill will prove beneficial or detrimental to the interests of the independent exhibitors!

How many of you enjoy the privilege of screening a first-run picture first before signing a contract for it? None, I presume! Well, the Neely Bill will confer upon you the same privilege that the Loew organization and all the other affiliated circuits enjoy—screen the picture first before booking it.

Of course, you don't have to screen it; you may have some one else see it for you to inform you as to its probable worth to your box office. But at least the privilege of screening it is there for you to enjoy, if you should wish to take advantage of it.



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### NORTH DAKOTA THEATRE DIVORCE LAW UPHELD BY FEDERAL COURT

The long expected decision of Circuit Judges Sanborn and Thomas and District Judge Sullivan, the judges who heard the Paramount suit against the State of North Dakota to have the North Dakota statute that makes unlawful the ownership, operation or control of motion picture theatres by producers or distributors of motion pictures declared unconstitutional, was handed down last week; it upholds the law.

The decision is very sweeping. Here are a few advance extras:

"Defendants introduced evidence showing the extent and nature of the controversy which has existed between independent exhibitors and the producer-distributors owning theatres, which tends to prove that the independent owner is at a disadvantage in competition with affiliated theatres.

"No evidence that producers who have affiliated theatres have an agreement or understanding that none of their number shall enter the competitive territory in which another of them has theatres. They apparently have refrained from competing with each other in the exhibition field.

"A producer which owns theatres has the power to make it impossible for the independent exhibitor to procure films from it, and difficult to procure them from other major producers in case the producer-exhibitor desires those films for itself.

"There is evidence tending to show that producers with affiliated theatres have exercised the power possessed by them for their own advantage and to the detriment of their independent competitors.

"The existence of unusual power to deal with competitors unfairly, where coupled with the opportunity and temptation to use that power is probably a sufficient basis for legislative action to prevent the possibility of its exercise. This must certainly be so where there is, in addition, evidence of past aggressions."

Thus the contention of Allied State Association that the law is constitutional has been upheld, and the efforts of its general counsel and of his associates to establish the existence of a motion picture trust have been successful.

The court found that Paramount has not yet achieved a monopoly in North Dakota, and that there have been no abuses in that State, but it declared that the State has the right to take into consideration the abuses that have been committed in other states and to adopt such legislation as to make the practicing of them in North Dakota impossible.

Manifestly the judges were prompted to come to such a conclusion by the testimony that was offered by the following Allied leaders as to conditions in their respective states: Al Steffes, Minnesota; Messrs. Maertz and Koppelberger, Wisconsin; Col. H. A. Cole, Texas; Mr. V. U. Young, Indiana; and H. M. Richey, Michigan. But the most damaging evidence was extracted from the representatives of the producers themselves, during cross-examination.

The case will be carried to the U. S. Supreme Court.

The records of this case, of the Perleman case (Philadelphia), and of the Interstate case (Dallas) seem to bear out the assertions of Allied States and of this paper, made over a period extending many years, that the major companies, in their relations with independent exhibitors, have been doing things that would some day cause them much trouble. The repeated warnings were either laughed at or ignored completely. The laughs, however, are now proving costly to them.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that the major companies, in their desire to come to an understanding with the independent exhibitors, will offer honest-to-goodness concessions. If they will not, the program of Allied to find relief in the courts will go on uninterruptedly.

### A REMINDER OF 1937-38 SEASON'S CONTRACT PROVISIONS

As the season is about to end, many exhibitors have asked me to inform them whether they have the right to demand the delivery of "not generally released" pictures.

With a view to assisting all exhibitors to determine this question before the expiration of their right to make such a demand, if they have the right of doing so, HARRISON'S REPORTS gives the information in this editorial:

#### Columbia

The Columbia contract covers pictures released during the 13 month period between September 1, 1937 and September 30, 1938, and is for one year beginning with the date fixed for the exhibition of the first picture. Should the first picture become deliverable on, for example, November 15, 1937, then Columbia is under an obligation to deliver the minimum number it promised to deliver to the exhibitor before November 15, 1938. After November 15, 1938, the exhibitor is under no obligation to accept any more pictures should Columbia fail to deliver the minimum number, but he may claim damages should the minimum number not be delivered by that date, the sum being the rental of each undelivered picture.

The contract calls for a minimum of 40 pictures.

#### First National

The exhibitor cannot refuse to accept "not generally released" pictures; he may only demand them. But such a demand must be made, in writing, not later than August 15, 1938.

Such pictures may be considered as "not generally released" as will not be released between September 1, 1937, and August 31, 1938.

This contract, too, runs for a year beginning with the play-dating of the first picture in accordance with the terms of the contract.

What is true of the First National contract is true of the Warner Bros. contract.

#### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

The MGM contract promises a minimum of 44, or a maximum of 52 pictures, to be delivered between September 1, 1937, and August 31, 1938.

Since up to "Love Finds Andy Hardy," set for release July 22, MGM will have released 38 features, the problem of "not generally released" pictures will hardly arise, because it has until August 31 to release the remaining 8 pictures of the minimum number guaranteed.

#### Paramount

Paramount promised no minimum number of regular feature pictures, but a maximum of 52, to be released between August 1, 1937, and July 31, 1938.

Since up to "The Texans," set for release August 12, Paramount will have released a total number of 47 regular features, and the home office of this company has stated that more pictures are to be released, the maximum number of 52 will undoubtedly be released. But here is something that you may want to know:

(Continued on last page)



**"Prison Break" with Barton MacLane  
and Glenda Farrell**

(*Universal, July 15; time, 72 min.*)

A strong melodrama, well acted, but quite depressing. This is due to the fact that the hero, an innocent victim of a murder charge, is made to go through so much suffering before he is finally vindicated, that the spectator becomes restless and even annoyed. For instance, not only is he sent to prison for a crime he did not commit, thereby separating him from the woman he loved, but he is tortured at the prison by the very man who had committed the murder for which he had been sentenced. And when he is released on parole, he cannot find a position and is even forbidden to marry during the parole period. And to add to his misfortunes, his sister and her husband, whom he had adored, are both drowned. The closing scenes are fairly exciting, holding the spectator in suspense. There the hero and the heroine are held captive by the murderer; but they finally overpower him, their intention being to turn him over to the authorities and so clear MacLane's name.

Norton S. Parker wrote the original story, and he and Dorothy Reid, the screen play; Arthur Lubin directed it, and Trem Carr produced it. In the cast are Constance Moore, Edmund MacDonald and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Port of Seven Seas" with Wallace Beery,  
Maureen O'Sullivan, Frank Morgan  
and John Beal**

(*MGM, July 1; time, 80 min.*)

Just a fair comedy-drama; its appeal will be directed mostly to middle-aged folk. It has a few touching moments and some good comedy bits; but it is handicapped by an over-abundance of dialogue. The laughs are provoked by the good-natured bickering between Beery and Morgan, two old friends, who quarrel at the least provocation. The story shifts so often from comedy to drama, that it is difficult for one to get into the proper mood; as soon as one begins to feel sorry for the heroine, the scene shifts to comedy and the mood is naturally broken. Young folks will find the ending romantically disappointing. The action takes place on a waterfront street in Marseilles:—

Beery, cafe owner, who adored his son (John Beal) is heartbroken when he learns that Beal had gone to sea without even bidding him goodbye. Knowing that Morgan, one of his card-playing cronies, was in love with Miss O'Sullivan and wanted to marry her, he warns him to keep away from her for she was promised to his son. But Morgan senses that Miss O'Sullivan was in trouble, and asks for her hand in marriage; she confesses to him that she was going to have a baby. He is overjoyed, for he had always wanted a child; his only request was that she lead people to believe that the child was his. At first Beery is enraged; but when he learns the true state of affairs, he realizes that it was best for the baby since Morgan was a rich man and could give the child everything, including a name. Morgan is beside himself with joy when a boy is born; both he and Beery adore the child and Miss O'Sullivan. Everything goes smoothly, until

Beal suddenly returns; finding out that the child was his, he demands that Morgan release Miss O'Sullivan and the child. But Morgan and Beery convince him that such an act would be wrong; Miss O'Sullivan, despite her love for Beal, chooses to stay with Morgan.

Marcel Pagnol wrote the story, and Preston Sturges the screen play; James Whale directed it, and Henry Henigson produced it. In the cast are Jessie Ralph, Cora Witherspoon, Etienne Girardot, E. Allyn Warren, and others.

Not suitable for children or adolescents. Adult fare, Class B.

**"Professor Beware" with Harold Lloyd**

(*Paramount, July 29; time, 92 min.*)

After an absence of two years, Harold Lloyd returns in a very good comedy that should delight his followers. Although it is a little slow in getting started, the spectator soon forgets this in the excitement that follows. It is chuck-full of action and gags, some of which are extremely comical. Lloyd hasn't changed his technique, which is to the picture's benefit, for a comedy such as "Professor Beware" comes a pleasant relief after the many sophisticated comedies recently released. There are many gags; the two outstanding ones are, first, that in which Lloyd tries to dress a drunkard, and, secondly, where Lloyd, riding on top of a freight train, tries to avoid getting under a tunnel, by running the length of the train. The closing scenes are thrilling and comical:—

Lloyd, a professor, assistant at a museum, is the owner of nine tablets which tell the tragic story of two Egyptian lovers. But part of the final tablet is broken and Lloyd's one ambition was to find the missing piece so as to learn what happened to the lovers. He is thrilled when he receives an invitation to join a party of explorers going to Egypt. But things start happening to prevent him from getting to the boat in time. First he tries to help Phyllis Welch by giving his trousers to her press agent, who had lost his; then he is found by a policeman in a semi-nude condition and taken to jail. Miss Welch obtains his release by posting bail; but he jumps bail in an effort to get to New York and to the boat. Miss Welch follows him. Lloyd, believing that things were happening to them just as they had happened to the two Egyptian lovers, asks Miss Welch not to follow him for it would mean death for both of them. Continuing on, he becomes mixed up with two hoboos, rides freight trains, has fights, escapes from jail, and then marries Miss Welch, who, it turns out, was the daughter of a millionaire. But, still influenced by the story on the tablets, he parts from his wife; by a ruse, she gets him to assert himself, and in a terrific free-for-all fight Lloyd emerges victorious and claims his bride.

Crampton Harris, Francis M. Cockrell and Marian B. Cockrell, and Jack Cunningham and Clyde Bruckman wrote the story, and Delmer Daves, the screen play. Elliot Nugent directed and Mr. Lloyd produced it. In the cast are Raymond Walburn, Lionel Stander, William Frawley, Thurston Hall, Cora Witherspoon, and others.

Class A.



**"Army Girl" with Preston Foster,  
Madge Evans and Neil Hamilton**

(*Republic, August 12; time, 87 min.*)

Very good entertainment; it is as good as any major company output from the standpoint of production values, acting, and story. Combining thrills and human appeal with romance and comedy, it holds one's attention throughout. The thrills are brought about by the scenes showing cavalry men of the U. S. Army, and a small tank manned by two soldiers, riding over extremely rough and dangerous hilly country. The romance is charming:—

When Preston Foster, U. S. Army Captain, arrives at the cavalry post where H. B. Warner was commander, he realizes he was disliked, for, if his tank proved practicable, mechanized methods would replace the horses. Foster's rule had always been to keep away from army girls, but when he meets Madge Evans, Warner's daughter, he falls in love with her, as she does with him. The test works in favor of Foster, and orders soon arrive that the tanks should replace the horses and that Foster was to replace Warner. This enrages Miss Evans, and she breaks the engagement. On the day Foster was to take over command, Warner asks for permission to ride in the tank with Gleason, Foster's mechanic. Something goes wrong with the machine, it crashes, and both Gleason and Warner are killed. After an examination, which showed there was a defect in the brake, Foster is held for court-martial. Hamilton, an officer in love with Miss Evans, withholds important information; but his army training comes to the fore and he proves that the machine had been tampered with by Guinn Williams, a sergeant, who hated both Gleason and Foster. Foster is cleared; Miss Evans rushes to his arms.

Charles Clifford wrote the story, and Barry Trivers and Samuel Ornitz, the screen play; George Nicholls, Jr., directed it, and Sol C. Siegel, produced it. In the cast are Ruth Donnelly, Ralph Morgan, Heather Angel, Barbara Pepper and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Sky Giant" with Richard Dix,  
Chester Morris and Joan Fontaine**

(*RKO, July 22; time, 80 min.*)

Very good, insofar as the aviation angle is concerned; it gives the spectator an inside view as to how pilots are trained, and also some information as to the mechanical end of aviation. Its only weak point is the romance. There are many thrills; one of the most exciting scenes is that in which Dix and Morris take a plane up to an unusual height to make tests, and are rendered unconscious; Foster's recovery just before the plane reaches the ground saves them both from crashing. Equally thrilling are the scenes showing the men flying over uninhabited country, where they crash. The sympathy one feels for Dix makes one all the more resentful at the final outcome of the romance, which brings him unhappiness:—

Harry Carey, commander at an aviation school, is annoyed when his son (Morris), who had left a diplomatic career to become an aviator, arrives at the school; Carey did not believe that his son was serious enough for such a profession. Dix likes him, however, and helps him. Both Morris and Dix

fall in love with Joan Fontaine; she chooses Morris. But when she hears that he was going off with Dix on the dangerous mission of charting unexplored country, she insists that he give up the idea; he refuses and they part. Dix, believing the affair was at an end, proposes marriage; she accepts and they marry a few hours before the takeoff. Once in the air, Dix tells Morris the good news; he takes it sullenly and they quarrel. The plane crashes in a forest and the radio operator dies. Dix and Morris set out on foot; when Dix falls from fatigue, Morris decides to leave him there. But he changes his mind and helps him; after much hardship they reach a village and some time later home. Dix, realizing that Miss Fontaine and Morris still loved each other, agrees to an annulment.

Lionel Houser wrote the story and screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are Paul Guilfoyle, Vicki Lester, Robert Strange, and others.

Morally suitable. Suitability, Class A.

**"The Affairs of Annabel" with Jack Oakie  
and Lucille Ball**

(*RKO, [1938-39], date not set; time, 67 min.*)

A good program comedy; it is a satire on the publicity end of the motion picture industry. The laughs are provoked by the tricks Jack Oakie pulls to obtain publicity for the studio's star (Lucille Ball), for most of these tricks are so wild that they invariably get Miss Ball in trouble. One comical scene is that in which Miss Ball, who had insisted that Oakie be discharged, overhears him talking to an old lady about her forthcoming operation; she thinks the woman was his mother. But Oakie had really paid the woman to act as his mother so as to work on Miss Ball's sympathies. The romantic interest is just hinted at. Most of the excitement is concentrated in the final scenes:—

When Oakie learns that Miss Ball, in her next picture, was to play the part of a maid, he insists that she take a position as a maid so as to get experience. Knowing that she could not cook, he arranges to have a caterer deliver food, and he himself pretends to be a salesman for a floor-waxing concern so as to help her wax the floors. Thurston Hall, a member of the family and a crack-pot inventor, invites two men to the house, thinking they were financiers; instead, they turn out to be kidnappers wanted by the police. They intended to use the house as a hide-out and do not permit any one to leave. When Oakie finds out what had happened, he suggests that the studio send extras, dressed as police, to the house, to frighten the crooks. But when the crooks start firing, the extras all run away. The real police finally arrive; Miss Ball helps them capture the crooks. For this, she receives publicity all over the world. Just as she starts to relax, Oakie gets her involved in a diamond smuggling case, for he had learned that her new picture was to be called "Diamond Smugglers."

Charles Hoffman wrote the story, and Bert Granet and Paul Yawitz, the screen play; Ben Stoloff directed it, and Lon Lusty produced it. In the cast are Ruth Donnelly, Bradley Page, Fritz Feld, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



Up to "Professor Beware," which has been set for release July 29, Paramount will have delivered 45 pictures. In view of the fact that the next release is August 5 ("Give Me a Sailor,") and in view of the fact that Paramount has agreed to deliver the maximum 52 on or prior to July 31, 1938, it is the opinion of this paper that you are under no obligation to accept the remaining seven pictures. But you had better consult your lawyer in case you should decide to refuse acceptance of these seven pictures.

### DKO

According to the terms of this company's contract, the number of pictures that may be released between September 1, 1937 and August 31, 1938, is not limited, but the contract holder may demand the delivery only of the pictures that carry numbers from 801 to 848 inclusive. If the producer should fail to release these numbered pictures between the foregoing dates the contract holder must, nevertheless, accept them if they should be released up to December 31, 1938, unless he should see fit to notify the distributor, in writing, not later than September 10, 1938, that he does not want them.

Up to "Crime Ring," released July 8, this company released 38 pictures, among which are five pictures that carry numbers other than those aforementioned: "Victoria the Great" (861), "The Rat" (862), "Snow White" (891), "Gun Law" (881), and "Border G-Man" (882).

### Twentieth Century-Fox

This company's contract calls for a minimum of 46 pictures, or a maximum of 52, not more than five of them to be produced in England, to be released between August 1, 1937, and July 31, 1938. Excluded are the two Tarzans, four "outdoor" pictures, the Eddie Cantors, the re-issues, and the roadshows. It runs for one year from the date of the first play-dated picture.

Since this company will deliver all the pictures it has promised, no occasion will arise for sending to it a written notice about "not generally released" pictures.

### United Artists

The United Artists contract covers only such pictures as are described in the schedule specifically. These are to be released "generally" within 20 months from the date of the contract. Should the distributor fail to release some of the pictures, as described specifically in the schedule, then the contract is terminated in regard to those pictures.

If you have a United Artists contract, look at the date of its approval, count twenty months, and demand all the "schedule" pictures that will be released within those 20 months.

There is no way by which a contract holder may prevent the producer from holding up "schedule" pictures and releasing them after the 20 month contract period.

### Universal

The contract runs for 12 months from the date of the first play-dated picture.

The "not generally released" clause in this company's contract is written in the familiar wording, except that, instead of giving specific dates within which the company must release the pictures described in the schedule, it sets the following time limit: "during the release year specified in the Schedule." It is too vague to mean anything. Besides, under this type of provision, a contract holder may demand, but cannot reject, "not generally released pictures." So if you want whatever Universal pictures may not be "generally released" during the time limit "specified in the Schedule," send a written notice at once.

## THE EFFORTS AT CONCILIATION

Every one of you knows, of course, that on June 25 there was a conference at the White House between President Roosevelt and representatives of the major companies, including Mr. Will H. Hays. As a result of that conference the majors agreed to bring about industry reforms.

A few days afterwards, they designated Mr. Sidney R. Kent, president of 20th Century-Fox, to act as chairman of a committee to formulate a program, and then invite representatives of exhibitors to sit in with them with a view to agreeing as to what reforms should be made.

It is hardly the place here to discuss what has brought about the White House conference and why the major companies, a few days afterwards, appointed Mr. Sidney R. Kent as chairman of a committee to bring about the re-

forms needed. All this paper can say is that reforms are needed, and if they should be brought about, what difference does it make what has brought them about? What should concern the independent theatre owners is how sincere are the major companies.

That there are executives of major companies who are inspired with sincerity in their desire to bring about reforms the exhibitor leaders do not doubt, for they have had an opportunity to satisfy themselves as to that; but that there are also others who would give to the exhibitors as little as possible, only enough to "stop them from shouting," there is no doubt either. The results will, therefore, depend on which of these two groups predominates.

This paper has noticed in the statement that was issued by Mr. Kent immediately after his appointment as chairman of the conciliation committee the following:

"I am conscious of the fact that many exhibitor organizations have been urging for some time that such a program [to seek a solution of our industry problems] be undertaken, but there have been many difficulties in the way. However, we wish to assure the various exhibitor groups that the moment we are organized for action we will get in touch with them and arrange our program jointly with them from that point on."

I have no way of knowing what Mr. Kent meant by "the various exhibitor groups," for to the knowledge of HARRISON'S REPORTS there is only one exhibitor group that represents the independent theatre owners—Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors. If Mr. Kent has meant also Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America, then HARRISON'S REPORTS will say that the beginning of the conciliation move is not done very auspiciously, for this reason:

In former years, in the deliberations between exhibitors and distributors, a committee of Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America, with its president as the chairman, took part. Since this organization is supported by the dues from affiliated theatres and has in its membership at least four affiliated theatres to one independent theatre, few of the latter even paying dues, a committee of this organization naturally represents the interests of producers and distributors. Thus the independent exhibitor representatives found themselves under a disadvantage when they had sitting in the deliberations a committee which was supposedly representing exhibitors when in reality it represented producer-distributors. This committee took its orders from an advisor, appointed by the producer organization.

In such circumstances, the independent exhibitor representatives, whenever they insisted upon certain reforms as being fair and just, and the MPTO committee would oppose them, were placed in a position where they appeared as agitators, trouble makers, and persons unwilling to listen to reason.

Need this paper call your attention to statements made by the producer side to the effect that the exhibitor representatives were "paid" to do agitating, that "they represented no investment in theatres," and the like, some of such statements containing innuendoes as to the character of the exhibitor leaders and as to their motives?

HARRISON'S REPORTS has taken the pains to warn the producers against the repetition of the old methods. And an invitation of representatives of the subsidized organization to sit in the conference as an equal will throw the conciliation efforts of this committee on the rocks from the very start.

## TRADE PRACTICE COMMITTEE WORKING ON PROPOSALS

The trade practice committee that was appointed by the producers to weed out unfair trade practices in the motion picture industry and to set up a conciliation scheme is meeting frequently to formulate a plan of procedure.

It is assumed that the Allied Board of Directors will not meet to consider these conciliation proposals and the elimination of unfair trade practices until they are submitted to them in written form, for it is thus that an intelligent appraisal may be made of such proposals—whether they are liberal enough to become the basis of exhibitor-producer discussions.

The submission of the proposals to the exhibitors may be made soon.



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### THE GOVERNMENT'S SUIT AGAINST THE MAJOR COMPANIES

The suit that was filed on July 20 by the United States Government against the major companies under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act is, of course, no news to any one of you, for the daily press, everywhere in the United States, has printed accounts of it and made appropriate editorial comment. But there are some facts that neither the daily papers nor the industry's trade press has commented on. And it is to these that HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to call your attention.

Many of you have known all these years that the major producers, whether owners of theatres or not, granted special favors to the producer-owned theatres, but you have had little definite information on the subject. The Government brief now comes along and furnishes that proof.

Under the heading, "Benefits, favors and advantages extended by defendants to each other," the Government charges that the following methods, among others, have been employed by them:

1. *Sharing Advertising Costs:* "In many instances the contracts between the defendants as producers and other defendants as exhibitors provide that the advertising costs in the areas covered by such contracts shall be borne partially by the producer."

2. *Optional Contracts:* "In dealing with each other, the defendants, or some of them, as producers and others of them as exhibitors, frequently enter into contracts whereby the exhibitor is given the right and privilege to play certain specified feature photoplays, but without assuming any binding obligation to do so. This, in form, is a selective contract and provides for the exhibitor a wider selection of pictures without obligation to take them."

3. *Contract Modifications:* "In numerous instances material changes and alterations are made in contracts existing between the defendants, or some of them, as producers and others of them as exhibitors. Among the types of modifications thus allowed are the following:

'(a) Reduction in film rentals where pictures covered by the contract have been disappointing.

'(b) Reduction in film rentals where pictures covered by the contract are double-featured.

'(c) Reduction in film rentals where pictures covered by the contract are shown in vaudeville.

'(d) Reduction in film rentals where pictures covered by the contract are shown in connection with premium giveaways, by which attendance at the theatre is encouraged.

'(e) Changing pictures covered by a contract specifying percentage of box office revenue as rental, to a flat rental \* \* \*.

'(f) Elimination of pictures covered by contracts by repeating or extending the playing time of other pictures covered by the same contracts.

'(g) Transference of pictures contracted for exhibition in one theatre to another theatre operated by the same defendant.

'(h) Cancellation of pictures covered by a contract by reason of increased film rentals realized from other pictures covered by the same contract; in other words, where a picture exceeds expectations, the exhibitor is permitted to reduce his commitments for the exhibition of other pictures covered by the contract.'

4. *Overage and Underage:* "This is a practice extended by the defendants, as producers, to others of the defendants, as exhibitors, whereby the exhibitor defendants are permitted as to one theatre or group of theatres to play fewer

pictures than the minimum contract commitment requires, and to charge the deficit thus created against pictures played in excess of the commitment relating to another theatre or group of theatres operated by the same defendant."

5. *Cancellation of Short Subjects:* "The defendants, as exhibitors, are often permitted by other defendants, as producers, to cancel short subjects contracted for in instances where they enter into spot contracts for feature pictures."

6. *Move-overs:* "A practice whereby the defendants, or some of them, as exhibitors, are permitted by other defendants, as producers, to move a picture from a theatre where its exhibition has been completed, to another theatre operated by the same defendant for a continued run or exhibition. This practice adversely affects the box office value of a picture when it reaches subsequent-run exhibitors."

At the conclusion of each of these allegations the petition recites: "This privilege is seldom, if ever, extended to the independent exhibitors."

Mr. Abram F. Myers, of Allied States Association, commenting on these allegations, said:

"This association has long suspected that gross favoritism was practiced as between affiliated and independent theatres—we knew of some of the methods employed; but the Government's allegations, based on a thorough study of the contracts between the Big Eight and the affiliated theatres, are a revelation."

### HAVE THE PRODUCERS RECEIVED MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR?

There is no doubt in the mind of any one connected with the motion picture industry that the major producers knew in advance that the Government suit against them was coming; the trade papers have been full of Washington dispatches for several months, predicting its coming. But what one gathers from the statement of Mr. Hays is the fact that they expected the suit to be based only on trade practices that the Government considers as conflicting with the provisions of the Sherman Act; they did not expect that the Government brief would contain a demand for the separation of exhibition from production-distribution.

As a matter of fact, the statement of Mr. Hays and the time of its delivery to the press indicates but one thing, that it was prepared in advance, and was based on the theory that the Government suit would include only trade practices, and not a demand for a theatre divorce. That is what one gathers from the fact that Mr. Hays had left for the coast before the suit was filed. And even if he had been here, it would have been too late to effect any modifications, if the statement was to appear in the papers simultaneously with the statement by the Department of Justice.

Can any one doubt that such was the case by the fact that Mr. Hays, speaking for the major producers, stated that "Motion picture producers . . . will generally welcome the prospect of a comprehensive, fair and conclusive endeavor to clarify the application of the existing laws to" the separation of theatres from producer-distributor ownership, along with "the trade customs inherent in the development of the motion picture industry"? He would certainly have commented separately on the theatre divorce part of the Government's petition in equity.

The part of the Government's petition that seeks to bring about the separation of theatre ownership and control by producers and distributors reads partly as follows:

(Continued on last page)



**"Booloo" with Colin Tapley***(Paramount, July 22; time, 60 min.)*

Except for the brief jungle scenes and the shots of wild animal life, as well as a few fights between the animals, there is little to recommend this. If it had just been produced as an animal picture, it might have been all right, for there are some interesting shots of monkeys and of other animals; instead, a silly story, giving the reason for the hero's journey to the jungle, has been used, reducing the picture's suitability to juvenile appeal; adults may be bored. The closing scenes, where the hero saves the native girl from the white tiger, are fairly exciting:—

Colin Tapley, in order to clear the name of his father, whose story of the white tiger he had seen in the Malay Straits had been discredited, decides to go to the jungles to bring back the proof. His sweetheart (Jayne Regan) pleads with him not to go, but he is determined. Knowing that the natives believed the white tiger to be a god and that they would kill any one who tried to capture it, Tapley pretends to be just an ordinary hunter. He and his men set about capturing animals, but they keep their eyes open for the white tiger. Their chance comes; Tapley sees a ceremony in which a girl was chosen to be sacrificed to the tiger. He saves the girl and kills the tiger. The natives prepare to kill him, but the arrival of British troops saves his life. With the proof he brings back, his father's name is cleared; he and Miss Regan are reunited.

Clyde E. Elliott wrote the story and directed and produced it; Robert E. Welsh wrote the screen play. In the cast are Michio Ito, Herbert DeSouza, Mamo Clark, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Racket Busters" with Humphrey Bogart, George Brent and Gloria Dickson***(Warner Bros., Aug. 13; time, 70 min.)*

A good program racketeer melodrama. The action centers around the efforts of an honest district attorney to wipe out the racketeers, who were preying on helpless business men and workers. It is exciting during those situations in which action predominates; but it occasionally drags because of too much talk. The hero is a negative character; his courageous flare-up in the beginning peters out, leaving him in an unsympathetic position. As a matter of fact, his actions in stealing money from one of the racketeers is unpleasant, even though an effort is made to condone it. The romance is of minor importance:—

When racketeers enter the vegetable produce field, George Brent and his partner (Allen Jenkins), owners of four trucks working the vegetable markets, refuse to be intimidated. Brent induces other truck drivers not to join the racketeer outfit, which demanded exorbitant fees for protection. But when the racketeers burn his trucks and ruin his business, Brent becomes discouraged, particularly since his wife was expecting a baby. Desperate, he holds up one of the members of the racketeer outfit, and steals from him a large sum of money. Bogart, racketeer chief, calls on Brent and tells him he could keep the money and start in business again on condition that he join his organization and encourage others to follow him. He joins them. Brent's pals are disgusted with him, for they felt that he had turned traitor. When his wife returns home after the birth of a child, she learns the truth and berates Brent. But nothing moves him until an old pal, secretary of the legitimate union, is killed by the racketeers; he then rushes to the aid of the produce men and the truck drivers, who had been forced to call a strike on Bogart's orders. After a terrific fight, the truck drivers win out, and the racketeer gang is rounded up. Walter Abel, the district attorney, with the help of willing witnesses who, up to that time, had been afraid to testify, wins a verdict against Bogart, with long term sentences against him and his men.

Robert Rossen and Leonardo Bercovici wrote the screen play, and Lloyd Bacon directed it. In the cast are Penny Singleton, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Love Finds Andy Hardy" with Mickey Rooney, Lewis Stone and Judy Garland***(MGM, July 22; time, 90 min.)*

A delightful addition to the Hardy family series. Its down-to-earth typical American family scene is presented with so much realism, that one feels as if the affairs of a real family were unfolding. By this time, the characters are so familiar, that one follows their actions with interest. Although all the performances are good, it is Mickey Rooney who again arouses most of the laughs, this time by the trouble he has with his girl friends. The picture's box-office value is enhanced by the presence of Judy Garland, whose singing of three popular numbers should go over very well:—

Mickey pays a deposit of \$12 on a car, promising to pay the balance of \$8 before the end of the month. Not being able to get the money together, he enters into a business proposition with a pal, who had to go out of town: for the sum of \$8, he promises to take care of his pal's girl friend so that no other boy could make a date with her. But this gets him into difficulties with his own girl (Ann Rutherford). It develops that neither of the girls would go to the Christmas dance with him. Judy Garland, who was visiting her grandmother, contrives, in spite of the fact that Mickey thought her to be just a child, to get him to take her to the dance. Mickey is proud of the hit Judy makes when she sings. Knowing how Mickey felt about Ann, she brings them together before she leaves. Happiness is restored to the family when the mother, who had gone to visit a sick relative, returns in time for Christmas celebration.

Vivien R. Bretherton wrote the story, and William Ludwig, the screen play; George B. Seitz directed it. In the cast are Cecilia Parker, Fay Holden, Lana Turner, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Speed to Burn" with Michael Whalen and Lynn Bari***(20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Aug. 26; time, 61 min.)*

Good program entertainment. It has fast action, exciting situations, comedy, and romance. And it holds one in tense suspense throughout, owing to the efforts of the villain to obtain possession of a race horse that was owned by the heroine. As a matter of fact, the story builds up to a thrilling climax, in which the villain is thwarted. Henry Armetta, as the head of an Italian family that becomes mixed up in the racing business, is very good, causing laughs each time he appears. One of the most amusing situations is that in which he buys betting tickets at a race and then, thinking his horse would lose, tries to sell them. The romance is routine but pleasant:—

Marvin Stephens, a jockey, is heartbroken when his horse loses an important race. He felt something was wrong but did not realize that the horse had been stiffened up by henchmen of Sidney Blackmer, who wanted to buy it. But the horse is sold together with others to the police department. Michael Whalen, a mounted policeman, takes the horse for himself and trains it. But Blackmer, still desirous of owning the horse, creates disturbances in the streets to excite the horse, and Whalen is thrown and taken to a hospital. Whalen is unhappy when he learns the facts from Stephens, who had forced the information from one of Blackmer's henchmen. Knowing that Lynn Bari was Blackmer's secretary, he thinks she was in on the trick. But Miss Bari, ashamed of her association with Blackmer, tries to make up for what had been done by buying the horse and giving her own time and money to training it. Blackmer tries to steal the horse and, being unable to do so, kidnaps Stephens on the day of the race. But Stephens is found by the police and rushed to the track, where, despite an injury he had received by jumping from Blackmer's car, he rides the horse to victory. Whalen and Miss Bari are reconciled.

Edwin D. Torgerson wrote the story, and Robert Ellis and Helen Logan, the screen play; Otto Brower directed it, and Jerry Hoffman produced it. In the cast are Chick Chandler, Johnnie Pirrone, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Mother Carey's Chickens" with Anne Shirley, Ruby Keeler, James Ellison and Fay Bainter**

(RKO, July 29; time, 81½ min.)

A good family picture, with deep human appeal. The settings and costumes are of the old-fashioned type, similar to "Little Women." Despite the simpleness of the story, it has definite charm; the scenes of the happy family life are extremely appealing. There is good comedy, too; audiences should find particularly amusing the scenes that show the family frightening away a middle-aged couple that wanted to put them out of their home. A newcomer, Donnie Dunagan, is delightful in the part of the baby of the family; and all the other players are good, too, acting with realism and feeling:—

With the death of her husband, a Naval officer, Fay Bainter is left with just a small sum of money. One of her daughters (Anne Shirley) induces her to lease an old run-down spacious house, renovate it, and then take in boarders. Miss Bainter agrees to it and all the children, Miss Shirley, Ruby Keeler, Jackie Moran, and even little Donnie, set to work to fix up the house; they are helped along by James Ellison, a school-teacher who had become acquainted with the family. He and Miss Keeler fall in love. This brings unhappiness for a time to Miss Shirley, who imagined she loved him. Just as the house is in perfect order, the family is shocked to receive a visit from Frank Albertson, the owner, telling them that, as he had sold the house, they would have to move. But Albertson, after living with them for a few days, realizes the wrong he had done them and hits upon an idea of frightening the new owners away. When they arrive, every one speaks casually about ghosts, and at night they make all sorts of noises. The plan works; the frightened couple tear up the bill of sale and leave. Everyone is overjoyed, especially Miss Shirley, who had fallen in love with Albertson.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Kate Douglas Wiggin. S. K. Lauren and Gertrude Purcell wrote the screen play, Rowland V. Lee directed it, and Pandro S. Berman produced it. In the cast are Walter Brennan, Alma Kruger, Margaret Armstrong, and others.

Class A.

**"Mr. Chump" with Johnnie Davis, Lola Lane and Penny Singleton**

(Warner Bros., Aug. 6; time, 60 min.)

A trite, unpleasant story, poor production values, lack of star names, and an over-abundance of dialogue, make this a poor program offering. The only thing in its favor, as far as young folk are concerned, is the five or ten minutes during which Johnnie Davis, accompanied by a swing band, sings a popular number. Aside from that, not one of the characters arouses sympathy; as a matter of fact their actions, including that of the hero's, even though treated as comedy, are pretty demoralizing. The producers try to cover this up by showing that in the end the hero and two others go to jail for their misdeeds, but this does not help matters much:—

Penny Singleton tries to induce her fiance (Davis) to get a job; but he prefers playing a trumpet or dreaming of the day when he would become a millionaire by playing the stock market. Penny, egged on by her sister (Lola Lane), who was married to Chester Clute, a timid bank clerk earning \$20 a week, decides to give up Davis to become engaged to Donald Briggs, the bank manager. Davis leaves town to join a band. After a few months he returns with the band and Miss Singleton, accompanied by Briggs, goes to hear him play; he is sensational. She quarrels with Briggs and becomes reconciled with Davis. Clute informs them that his accounts were \$10,000 short; he had taken the money to play the stock market according to Davis' methods—but he had lost. They then learn that Briggs had done the same thing, but with \$22,000. Davis insists that the only way he could help them was for them to take \$50,000 more from the bank to give it to him to play the stock market; they do. Davis wins and buys the bank; but the bank examiners find out about the deficits and Davis, Clute, and Briggs are sent to prison, where they play in the prison band.

George Bricker wrote the original screen play; William Clemens directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Spencer Charters and Frank Orth.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Keep Smiling" with Jane Withers, Gloria Stuart and Henry Wilcoxon**

(20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Aug. 12; time, 77 min.)

This is one of the best Jane Withers pictures yet made. Not only is Jane in top form, but she has been given a good story, with deep human appeal. And for spectators who enjoy behind-the-scene stories of Hollywood, this should prove exciting, since a good part of the action takes place at a motion picture studio. Jane shows remarkable talents as a mimic—her imitations of Joan Davis and others are excellent. The closing scenes touch one's emotions:—

Jane, an orphan, who had been living at a boarding school where the bills were paid by her uncle (Henry Wilcoxon), a successful Hollywood director, decides to pay him a surprise visit. She sells her clothes to get together enough for the fare. When she finally arrives in Hollywood, she is heartbroken to learn that Wilcoxon was no longer a director, that he had taken to drink, and that all his belongings were offered for sale at auction. Gloria Stuart, Wilcoxon's secretary, takes Jane under her wing and cares for her. Miss Stuart, who loved Wilcoxon, conspires with Jane to bring him back to a normal state. Jane, through a trick, gets a chance in a picture; she is tortured by the director, who hated her uncle. The producer, finally noticing the director's unfairness, orders him off the set and asks Wilcoxon to take over. Everyone is overjoyed, for it meant a new start and happiness for all concerned. Wilcoxon proposes to Miss Stuart.

Frank Fenton and Lynn Root wrote the story, and Frances Hyland and Albert Ray, the screen play; Herbert I. Leeds directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are Helen Westley, Jed Prouty, Douglas Fowley, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Alexander's Ragtime Band" with Alice Faye, Tyrone Power and Don Ameche**

(20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Aug. 19; time, 105 min.)

Excellent entertainment, capably directed and acted. It is an unusual type of musical, in that its appeal is not limited just to young folk; as a matter of fact, it should thrill the older ones, for the familiar Irving Berlin tunes will bring back memories of days gone by. And the surprising part of it all is that the music is still fresh and delightful. The production is extremely lavish, depicting in an interesting way the pre-war and post-war era of night club development, as well as the progress of jazz music. The outstanding thing about this picture is the music, and there is plenty of that. In addition, it has comedy, romance, and human appeal. The action is well paced, except for the closing scenes, which are a bit draggy:—

Tyrone Power, to the dismay of his wealthy aunt (Helen Westley), gives up a career as a concert violinist to become leader of a jazz band in a honky tonk on the Barbary Coast. The only thing that annoyed him was the fact that he had to accept Alice Faye, a singer, as a member of his band, for she was loud-mouthed and vulgar, and quarreled with him. But as they rise in popularity and importance, and obtain engagements at better places, Miss Faye changes for the better and develops into a charming, well-dressed lady. She and Power fall in love with each other. When Miss Faye receives and accepts an offer from a prominent producer to appear in New York, Power is furious; they quarrel and part. War is declared and, before the lovers could become reconciled, Power is sent to France. He returns, eager to see Miss Faye again; but he is shocked when he learns that she had married Ameche, a member of his band. He is despondent, until Jack Haley induces him to form another band, with Ethel Merman as vocalist. In the meantime Ameche, realizing that Miss Faye still loved Power, suggests that she divorce him; but before she could tell the good news to Power he leaves for Europe for important engagements. Saddened, she gives up her Broadway engagement and travels around the country, singing in cheap cafes. On Power's return, he learns about the divorce and starts a search for Miss Faye. They are finally brought together, during a swing concert that Power was giving at a concert hall.

Kathryn Scola and Lamar Trotti wrote the screen play, Henry King directed it, and Harry Joe Brown produced it. In the cast are Jean Hersholt, John Carradine, Paul Hurst, Ruth Terry, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



"That the defendants Paramount Pictures, Inc., Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, and Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc., and each of them, both as producers and distributors of motion pictures, under the direction and supervision of the court be ordered and directed to divest themselves of all interest and ownership, both direct and indirect, in theatres and theatre holdings and that they, and each of them and their respective successors be permanently enjoined from acquiring directly or indirectly any other interests in the exhibition of motion pictures or in any persons, firms, or corporations which are engaged or may engage in the exhibition of motion pictures; said divestiture to be accomplished and carried out upon such terms and conditions as the court may deem proper, and that pending such divestiture the operation and management of said theatres and theatre holdings be placed in the hands of trustees to be selected by the court, who shall be entirely free from the control or domination of any producer or distributor of motion pictures."

In the case of Loew's, Inc., and RKO, the petition asks that these two companies divest themselves of all interest in production as well as distribution of motion pictures. This distinction was made because originally these two companies were exhibitors.

The "ten-strike" of the petition is the use of a statement made by Mr. Adolph Zukor in 1918 against the ownership of theatres by producer-distributors to convince the court that ownership or control of theatres is an evil, and one of the greatest perils "that has ever confronted the industry." Mr. Zukor then said:

"The evil of producing and exhibiting coalitions is one of the gravest perils that has ever confronted the motion-picture industry. For some time past this condition has been developing and now threatens to halt the industry's progress, if indeed it does not set it back beyond the point at which it first took its place among the organized industries of the day. It has been permitted to develop this far because no one individual, either producer or exhibitor, has dared face the facts himself and compel other producers and exhibitors to face them with him.

"We should all realize that the most effective way to develop the industry to its largest capacity is to maintain a broad, open field of endeavor in its every branch. The exhibitors now enjoy the advantage of having the choice of several well-established feature programs from which they can select any range of subjects suitable to their individual requirements. Also, because these producing firms are well established they are in a position to produce pictures far ahead of release date, giving the exhibitor an added advantage in being able to arrange his bookings far in advance and therefore avail himself of a careful selection of subjects.

"The producers, in feeling that they have all the exhibitors in the country as prospective customers, are encouraged to make greater efforts and expend bigger sums for their productions and equipment. On the other hand, the exhibitors, in keeping all their lines open, have the choice of all the productions on the market. In this manner the business opportunities of both factors are unrestricted and permissible of any possible expansion. The moment exhibitors limit the market of producers, or the producers limit the buying opportunities of the exhibitor, the business is retarded and its growth is stunted. \* \* \*

"If the business is to progress, it must advance upon the basis of free and unhampered selection of product for exhibitors, large and small, and the exhibitors alone can cure this evil by a resolute refusal to be drawn into any allied scheme, even if the results promised are of temporary benefit to themselves. \* \* \*

## THE PRODUCER HABIT OF PROMISING PICTURES AND NOT DELIVERING THEM

The July 8 issue of *Amusements*, the trade paper of the Minneapolis zone, says the following:

"Advocating a buying strike on 20th Century-Fox product until the company delivers four pictures assertedly promised on the 1937-38 contracts, W. A. Steffes, president of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest, this week

lashed out at a company advertisement sign by President S. R. Kent, asserting that the company has kept faith with its customers.

"20th Century-Fox, according to Steffes, is trying to resell at higher prices 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' 'Hudson Bay Company,' 'Jesse James,' and 'Mother Knows Best.'"

Mr. Steffes stated: "For some unknown reason these pictures have not been and will not be delivered on the 1937-38 contracts, and now are being resold to those of you who have bought them (or thought they did) last year.

"You are entitled to these pictures according to the terms of the contract."

Twentieth Century-Fox is not the only company that has withheld 1937-38 season's pictures to sell them in the 1938-39 season. According to a release sent out by the Washington office of Allied States Association, almost every company has withheld worth-while 1937-38 season pictures. Columbia, for example, has withheld "You Can't Take It With You," and "Second Mrs. Draper." First National-Warner Bros., "The Sisters," "Valley of the Giants," "On Your Toes," "Boy Meets Girl," "Desert Song," "Comet Over Broadway," "Story of San Michele," and "Yes, My Darling Daughter."

MGM has withheld, "Idiot's Delight," "Marie Antoinette," "Kim," and others.

Paramount has withheld, "If I Were King," "Men With Wings," "Paris Honeymoon," and "Midnight."

United Artists has withheld, "The Lady and the Cowboy," promised with Gary Cooper; "Personal History," "A Man and His Woman," "The Young in Heart," "Drums," and "Four Feathers."

In addition to these pictures, the big producers advertised many others, but either have not or are not going to deliver them.

The Allied leaders will do well to ask the producers collectively, when they gather at a conference to agree upon industry reforms, what they are going to do about the habit of promising to the exhibitors pictures and then not delivering them.

## INSTITUTIONAL ADVERTISING AND GREATER MOVIE SEASON

The recommendation to the producers about institutional advertising and greater movie season, made in the May 21 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS under the heading, "The Value of Institutional Advertising," seems to have had an effect if we are to judge by the fact that the producers have already set up committees to put them into effect.

Mr. Hays set the matter going when he made a speech at the luncheon of the Association of Motion Picture Advertisers, July 14, recommending the campaign. He said that "newspaper advertising is essential to this end."

Already three committees are working hard at it. One of them, under the chairmanship of George Schaefer, general manager of United Artists, is taking care of the distributing end; the second, under the chairmanship of Mr. Howard Dietz, MGM chief publicity director, is looking after the advertising end, while the third, under the chairmanship of Y. Frank Freeman, is looking after the theatre end.

It seems as if this time the greater movie season has been undertaken with a real plan. The results should be highly satisfactory.

## "BLOCKADE" IS "A KISS IN PARIS"

To save you the trouble of communicating with this office to find out what is what about "Blockade," let me say that, in accordance with a high United Artists home office executive, "Blockade," the Walter Wanger production, which is released through United Artists, is none other than "A Kiss in Paris."

If any exhibitor has been denied delivery of this picture as a 1937-38 production, HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to say that the local exchange has exceeded its authority, and that, if he should communicate with the United Artists home office, at 729 Seventh Avenue, New York, proper attention will be given to his communication.



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### ALLIED HAS REASON TO BE PROUD OF ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Part of the statement that was issued by the Washington office of Allied States Association reads as follows:

"July, 1938, will go down in exhibitor history as the month in which Allied's long but persistent battle for exhibitor rights was won.

"The decision in the North Dakota Case and the filing of the Government's suit do not in themselves effect the desired result but they are the handwriting on the wall.

"At the Pittsburgh Convention, Allied's general counsel said that as a result of the progress made on the Neely Bill, the divorce legislation, the forthcoming monopoly investigation and possible action by the Department of Justice, 'the monopolistic practices of the motion picture trust are doomed.'

"Anyone with common sense should have known that the intolerable conditions imposed on the independent exhibitors could not be continued indefinitely. All that Allied has fought for, and all that has occurred, finds justification in the following passage from the President's anti-monopoly message:

"If private enterprise, left to its own devices, becomes half regimented and half competitive, half slave and half free, as it is today, it obviously can not adjust itself to meet the needs and demands of the country.'"

Under the heading, "A Wonderful Opportunity," the statement says:

"The filing of this action clears the atmosphere, removes uncertainty, provides an opportunity for the industry to clean house and should be welcomed.

"Self-regulation is a fine principle and should be practiced by all industries capable of doing so. There is no dodging the fact that in the matter of monopolistic organization and practices, the motion picture producers and distributors, linked together through the Hays Association, have failed utterly to curb their own predatory tendencies.

"The Trade Practice Conference in 1927, the 5-5-5 Conferences, the conferences led by S. R. Kent in 1932, and the N.R.A. proceedings led to no permanent or substantial reforms.

"Some of the commitments made by members of the Big Eight on those occasions were either never put into effect or were soon forgotten.

"All such efforts have been made coincident with some adverse development—an order of the Federal Trade Commission, imminence of block booking legislation, etc. None was initiated in an off-year when there could be no suspicion as to the motive behind the movement.

"The movement recently announced may have been, and as regards some of the participants doubtless was, undertaken in good faith. However, it was problematical whether the movement would have reached a satisfactory conclusion or whether the results would have been enduring.

"Now that this suit has been filed, the Big Eight have a golden opportunity to clean house and to straighten out their relations with the Government, the independent exhibitors and the public. They can now bring forward their proposals for bringing themselves into conformity with the law. If such proposals are acceptable to the Government, they can be embodied in a decree which can not be disregarded whenever the temptation arises so to do.

"The motion picture industry is at the crossroads and its future will be determined by the course it now adopts. The Big Eight must bring about an abrupt change in their public relations policies. They must realize that they can not get by with flagrant violations of the law and unfair and oppressive practices by purely political methods. The 'fixing' days are gone forever. They must make up their minds hereafter to deal frankly, fairly and directly with all who have a legitimate concern with the operations of the industry. It is a job for men of experience, integrity and tact; definitely it can not be accomplished by conniving political methods.

"Allied hopes that out of this maelstrom will come dignity, peace and security for a great industry. Moreover, she stands ready and willing to cooperate with like minded executives among the motion picture producers and distributors."

It has been a long and hard fight, but victory is in sight.

### THE INDUSTRY IS IN FOR A "CLEANING OUT"

In the statement of the Department of Justice that appeared in the newspapers simultaneously with the news of the filing of the suit by the Government against the major companies, the following points, of interest to every independent exhibitor, were brought out:

"The investigation by the Department of Justice was made in response to numerous complaints by independent producers, distributors, and exhibitors and by the theatre-going public. Independent companies complained that the defendants were threatening their complete exclusion from the business. . . ."

"... The finer theatres and theatre chains are now dominated by five of the major companies—Paramount Pictures, Inc.; Loew's, Incorporated; Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation; Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc., and Twentieth Century-Fox Corporation. These companies, together with the three other major companies—United Artists, Columbia Pictures Corporation and Universal Corporation—control about 65 per cent of all pictures produced, from the selection of the story to the final showing at the theatre.

"The actual control of product is even greater than would appear from this figure, because from 80 to 90 per cent of the quality feature films upon which exhibitors are dependent for the successful operation of their theatres are produced or distributed by the eight major companies. . . ."

"In the early days of the industry the three branches of production, distribution and exhibition were to a large extent operated separately. A struggle for industry control developed between producers and exhibitors, as a result of which some producers entered the exhibition field—as in the case of the defendants Paramount Pictures, Inc., and Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.—and some exhibitors entered the production field, as in the case of Loew's, Incorporated. In 1919, the very next year after issuing his prophetic statement of the evils expected from such a combination, Adolph Zukor, then a leading producer, determined to enter the exhibition field. He moved swiftly. Other companies moved to keep up with him. The period of the

(Continued on last page)



**"The Texans" with Joan Bennett  
and Randolph Scott**

(Paramount, August 12; time, 92 min.)

This is a great spectacle of the outdoors, taking place in the southwest during the reconstruction period following the Civil War; but it lacks a substantial plot and realistic characterizations. The most glaring error was made in casting Joan Bennett in the part of a pioneering cattle rancher, for she neither looks nor acts the part convincingly; she goes through hardships and encounters with Indians, and comes through it all looking just as neat and trim as if she had been sitting at home. Aside from this, action fans should be thrilled by the scenes of cattle crossing a river, fights between northerners and southerners, encounters between the ranchers and Indians, the fast riding, and general excitement, such as the situation where the cattle, frightened by the sound of an engine whistle, stampede:—

Miss Bennett, a true southerner, who despised the northerners for their treatment of her people, assists her fiancé (Robert Cummings) by getting guns through to him, which were intended for a new army to rout the northerners; she is helped by Randolph Scott, an impoverished southern soldier, who does so out of chivalry for he disagreed with her attitude toward the north. He tries to induce her to drive her cattle north to Abilene, Kansas, where there was a railroad, and where she could get a good price for her stock; but she refuses. She changes her mind, however, when Robert Barrat, reconstruction official, tries to steal her land by placing an exorbitant tax on her cattle, which she could not pay. Led by Scott and his pal (Raymond Hatton), all the ranch hands, including Miss Bennett and her grandmother (May Robson), start the trek to the north, pursued by Barrat and federal soldiers; they go through terrific hardships—snowstorms, dust storms, rains, and encounters with Indians. But they eventually arrive at their destination and complete their deal. Miss Bennett finally realizes that Cummings was a wild dreamer and that Scott was the man for her.

Emerson Hough wrote the story, and Bertram Millhauser, Paul Sloane, and Wm. W. Haines, the screen play; James Hogan directed it, and Lucien Hubbard produced it. In the cast are Walter Brennan, Harvey Stephens, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Chaser" with Dennis O'Keefe  
and Ann Morriss**

(MGM, July 29; time, 75 min.)

Just moderately entertaining program fare, in spite of the fact that the story is an interesting expose of the fake accident racket and how it is worked by a shyster lawyer and his assistants. There is not one character with whom the spectator is in sympathy; as a matter of fact all of them, from the hero down, resort to trickery to gain their ends. For instance, the hero is a shyster lawyer who does not hesitate to frame accidents and cases in order to bring court actions; that is how he earns his livelihood. On the other hand, the heroine, too, is an unpleasant character, for she acts as a stool pigeon in order to get evidence against the hero. The hero's main assistant, a doctor, constantly under the influence of liquor, works with the hero by giving false medical reports on cases where clients had not even been injured.

And so each character is presented as a person without any scruples. In the end, of course, the hero is regenerated by his love for the heroine, but it somehow does not ring true.

In the development of the plot, Henry O'Neill, attorney for the transit company that had been plagued with faked cases brought by Dennis O'Keefe, a shyster lawyer, decides to frame O'Keefe. He employs Miss Morriss to get the necessary information against O'Keefe. They fall in love with each other; but when he finds out what she had been doing, he purposely marries her the night before the trial so that she could not testify against him; but O'Neill turns the tables by arresting Miss Morriss for perjury. This makes O'Keefe realize how he had wronged her. By framing O'Neill on a drunk driving charge, O'Keefe forces him to release Miss Morriss. But Miss Morriss refuses to become reconciled with O'Keefe until he promises to give up his shyster practice.

Chandler Sprague and Howard E. Rogers wrote the story, and Everett Freeman, Harry Ruskin, Bella and Samuel Spewack, the screen play; Edwin L. Marin directed it, and Frank Davis produced it. In the cast are Nat Pendleton, Ruth Gillett, John Qualen, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Bulldog Drummond in Africa" with  
John Howard, Heather Angel  
and H. B. Warner**

(Paramount, August 5; time, 58 min.)

Except for the change in two players—Heather Angel replacing Louise Campbell, and H. B. Warner succeeding John Barrymore—this has the same players and is up to the standard, as to production values, set for the series. The story is slightly more far-fetched than the previous ones, but, since the action is fast and exciting, and is interspersed with comedy and romance, it should satisfy audiences that have found this series to their liking:—

On the eve of his oft-postponed marriage to Heather Angel, John Howard (Bulldog Drummond) finds out that H. B. Warner, Scotland Yard Inspector, had been kidnapped and taken by plane to Africa. Together with his ever-faithful valet (E. E. Clive), his pal (Reginald Denny), and Miss Angel, Howard sets out for Africa in his own plane. He knows that the kidnapper was J. Carrol Naish, an international spy, who wanted from Warner certain government secrets. Once Howard lands he is intercepted by the police, who prevent him from searching for Warner. But by ingenious devices he manages to get away from them and finds Naish's home, where Warner was being held a prisoner. After terrific fights during which their lives were endangered by lions Naish kept in his courtyard, Howard and Denny overpower the gang and rescue Warner. Naish is himself attacked and killed by a lion. Howard, Warner, and the others set back for London; Howard is determined not to let anything interfere with his marriage.

H. C. McNeile wrote the story, and Garnett Weston, the screen play; Louis King directed it, and Harold Hurley produced it.

Suitability, Class B.



**"Letter of Introduction" with Andrea Leeds,  
Adolphe Menjou, Edgar Bergen  
and George Murphy**

(*Universal, August 5; time, 102 min.*)

An excellent entertainment. It has comedy, romance, human appeal, and pathos. Most of the laughs are provoked by Edgar Bergen and his dummy "Charlie McCarthy"; and to add to the fun, Bergen introduces a new dummy called "Mortimer," supposedly a shy, silly farm hand; there is one situation where the two dummies meet that is extremely diverting. Bergen manipulates the dummies so cleverly that one is made to feel as if they were alive. Andrea Leeds again gives evidence of the fact that she is a fine actress; she wins and holds the spectator's sympathy throughout. The situation that touches the spectator most deeply is that in which Menjou, under the influence of liquor, makes a spectacle of himself in front of an audience:—

Miss Leeds arrives in town with a letter of introduction to Menjou, a famous motion picture star and former stage actor. When her boarding house burns down, she is befriended by George Murphy, a dancer, who takes her to the apartment of his partner (Rita Johnson). Murphy and Miss Leeds fall madly in love with each other. Miss Leeds sees Menjou and gives him the letter, which informs him that she was his daughter. Although they are both proud of the relationship, they decide to keep it a secret for professional reasons. But their friendship is misunderstood by all; Ann Sheridan, Menjou's fiancée, breaks their engagement, and Murphy, believing the worst, leaves Miss Leeds and proposes to Miss Johnson, who accepts him. Menjou, in order to launch his daughter's career, decides on a stage comeback with her as his leading lady. His intention was to tell the audience, at the end of the play, that he was her father. But on the opening night he drinks too much, forgets his lines, and even falls; the manager is compelled to bring the curtain down. Miss Leeds, heartbroken, leaves. And so does Menjou; walking in a daze, he is struck by an automobile and seriously injured. Miss Leeds rushes to the hospital; Menjou insists on seeing the reporters to tell them that Miss Leeds was his daughter, but he dies before he could do so. Miss Leeds decides to keep it a secret. Murphy comes to Miss Leeds' side; she tells him that Menjou was her father, and they are reconciled.

Bernice Boone wrote the story, and Sheridan Gibney and Leonard Spigelgass, the screen play. John M. Stahl directed and produced it. In the cast are Eve Arden, Ernest Cossart, and others.

Class A.

**"I'm from the City" with Joe Penner**

(*RKO, August 5; time, 66 min.*)

A fairly good comedy; but its appeal will be directed mostly to the Joe Penner fans since the action revolves entirely around him and his antics. There are quite a few situations that, despite their silliness, arouse hearty laughter. The horse race in the closing scenes where Penner, who was afraid of horses, is forced to ride at a fast pace across difficult country roads, is extremely amusing. There are a few musical interpolations:—

Penner, a daring bareback rider in the circus, is afraid of horses; the only way he could ride was to be hypnotized by his manager (Richard Lane),

who used a petrified acorn to accomplish his work. Lane is approached by a woman owner of a large ranch, who offers him \$1,000 to permit Penner to ride in a race for her ranch. Lane gets Penner to the ranch by pretending they were going there for a vacation. When Penner, while under a hypnotic spell, gives the men at the ranch an exhibition of his riding, they decide to bet all their money on him. Penner and the ranch owner's silly daughter fall in love; she promises to marry him if he should win the race. But Lane accidentally loses the petrified acorn and is unable to hypnotize Penner. Penner tries to escape but the boys threaten to kill him if he didn't ride. And so he rides and, to his surprise, wins.

Ben Holmes wrote the story and directed it; Nicholas T. Barrows, Robert St. Clair and John Grey wrote the screen play, and William Siström produced it. In the cast are Kay Sutton, Lorraine Krueger, Paul Guilfoyle, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Drums" with Sabu, Raymond Massey,  
Roger Livesey and Valerie Hobson**

(*London Film-U. Art., [1938-39], not set; 96 m.*)

Excellent. The lavish production, photographed in technicolor, is alone worthy of comment; but, in addition, the story is exciting and holds one's attention throughout. For sheer thrills, the closing scenes are unsurpassed; as a matter of fact, seldom has anything so thrilling been shown on the screen. The direction is brilliant, particularly in the handling of the mob scenes during the fighting. It is obvious that great care was taken to present everything in a realistic manner, both as to settings and action. The performances are uniformly good:—

Realizing that there would be trouble at the northwest frontier of India, due to the machinations of Prince Ghul, who plotted to unite the tribes against England, the British government sends Major Carruthers, a shrewd young officer, to assume charge of the outpost there. The appointment necessitates Carruthers' hasty marriage to Marjorie, the Governor's niece, who accompanies him. Carruthers negotiates a treaty with the Khan, whereby the British could build a fortification in Tokot in exchange for which they would assure him of his son's ascendancy to the throne. As soon as the British leave, Prince Ghul kills the Khan, his brother, and takes over the rule. The Khan's young son, Prince Azim, is rescued by two faithful servants, who take him to another town. There the young Prince resumes his acquaintance with Carruthers and with Bill, the drummer boy; Bill teaches him a drum signal to use in case of danger. Carruthers, another officer, and a detachment of soldiers are compelled to attend a ball given by Ghul. In the meantime, Azim, having learned that Ghul intended to kill his English guests, races on horseback to the palace and there gives the danger signal over the drums. Carruthers tries to get his men away in time, but the murderous natives had machine guns planted. With the arrival of fresh British troops, Ghul is killed and his men overpowered. Prince Azim is placed on the throne.

A. E. W. Mason wrote the story, and Arthur Wimperis, Patric Kirwan, and Hugh Gray, the screen play; Joltan Korda directed it, and Alexander Korda produced it. In the cast are David Tree, Desmond Tester, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



Nineteen Twenties became one of constant and aggressive acquisition of independent theatres by major companies. That struggle has resulted in domination and control of the best motion-picture theatres on a nation-wide scale by the major companies.

"Restoration of free enterprise and open competition amongst all branches of the motion-picture industry is the primary objective of this proceeding. To this end, and as a first step, a separation of production and exhibition interest is sought in order that all motion-picture theatres shall be free from the domination and control of any producers, and shall be immediately responsive and responsible to the tastes and demands of their respective patrons.

"Free from producer control, it is hoped that the theatres of the country will become a free, open and untrammelled market to which all producers may have access for the distribution and licensing of films based on merit. Exhibitors likewise will have access to all available motion-picture products in accordance with their respective abilities to pay for and utilize that product."

There are two places in the statement where a significant revelation is made as to the ultimate intents of the Department of Justice. At the end of the third paragraph in the introduction, under the heading, "Introductory Statement," there is said: "(4) to bring to the attention of Congress certain aspects of a factual situation which may need consideration in connection with further legislation"; and at the end of the entire statement there is said: "Until the evidence is produced, it is too early to state whether the anti-trust laws by themselves are sufficiently effective to restore competitive conditions. If it appears from such evidence that further aid is needed, the results of the investigation and trial will be brought to the attention of Congress."

In other words, the Government is determined to clean up this industry, and if it cannot do it through the present laws, additional legislation will be sought of Congress.

The industry is in for a "cleaning out" one way or other.

### CAN THE CONTRACT HOLDERS COMPEL FIRST NATIONAL TO DELIVER "BOY MEETS GIRL"?

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This editorial appeared in the February 26 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS. It is reproduced so as to satisfy many inquiries.)

When First National started selling its product last summer, its contract form named three pictures either by title and stars or by stars alone: "Adventures of Robinhood" (251), with Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland; "Food for Scandal" (252), with Carole Lombard, Fernand Gravet, and Ethel Merman; and No. 253, described as a "Big Musical," with Dick Powell, Ginger Rogers, and Benny Goodman and his orchestra as the stars.

About the middle of August First National altered the contract form, putting "Boy Meets Girl," the Broadway success, in place of "Big Musical."

Holders of the second form of contract have now been notified that No. 253 has been given to "Hollywood Hotel," and that they must accept this picture instead of "Boy Meets Girl."

An exhibitor has written to this office asking whether he is or is not under an obligation to accept "Hollywood Hotel," instead of "Boy Meets Girl."

I looked into the contract and found that the rights of the distributor to make the substitution are contained in the Eighth Clause, which reads as follows:

"(a) The Distributor shall have and hereby reserves the right in the sole discretion of the Distributor to change the title of any of the said motion pictures, to make changes in, alterations and adaptation of any story, book or play and to substitute for any thereof any other story, book or play. The Distributor also shall have and hereby reserves the right to change the director, the cast or any member thereof of any of said motion pictures.

"(b) The Exhibitor shall not be required to accept for any feature motion picture described in this Schedule as

that of a named star or stars, director or named well-known author, book or play, any motion picture or any other star or stars, director, author, book or play nor to accept any other feature motion picture in place of any thereof which in the Schedule is designated 'no substitute.' . . ."

In other words, the distributor has the right to give you any other picture he sees fit to deliver in place of the one it has sold you, unless the word "No Substitute" is contained near the title of the original picture; and since the phrase "No Substitute" is not contained in the space opposite No. 253, and described as a "Big Musical," First National is within its contractual rights in taking away "Boy Meets Girl" from those of you who have it and in delivering "Hollywood Hotel" in its place.

What has prompted the Warner Bros. executives to make this substitution is, no doubt, the fact that they have decided to put in the leading part of "Boy Meets Girl" James Cagney, with whom they have made peace. They may hold "Boy Meets Girl" back, to release it in the 1938-39 season, as a sort of "come on" for that season.

In view of the fact that Warner Bros. is delivering "Emil Zola" in place of "The Gamblers," which was contained in the original form, those of you who bought both products may feel that the "swap" is even; it is only in the cases where an exhibitor bought only the First National product that injustice will be done.

What should, however, impress you is not the fairness of the "swap" but the fact that the contract contains the "joker" provision. The type the contract is printed in is so fine that I doubt whether one out of each hundred exhibitors has noticed it.

### THE "GREATER MOVIE SEASON" CAMPAIGN PROCEEDING AUSPICIOUSLY

The setting up of the machinery for the national advertising and promotion campaign in the motion picture industry is proceeding with speed. And it has the cooperation of all the branches of the industry.

On Wednesday last week a meeting was held at the Hotel Astor to set the foundation for co-operation. Many independent exhibitors were present. The program was outlined, and an effort was made to remove the "kinks." Later in the day a meeting was held at the office of Mr. George Schaefer, general manager of United Artists, in which independent exhibitors, representing circuits, took part. The program was finally agreed upon.

This is the first time in the history of the motion picture industry that real cooperative spirit is shown; and if the same sentiment prevails all through the campaign, the results will prove highly profitable.

### ISN'T IT A "PLANT"?

The July 21 issue of *Daily Variety*, published in Hollywood, has a front-page editorial, prominently displayed, criticising the United States Government for having brought the anti-trust suit against the major companies.

*The Hollywood Reporter* of the same date, too, carries a similar editorial, likewise displayed prominently on the front page.

There is no question that these editorials have been inspired. The fact that both editorials have been written in the same mood and with the same spirit, that both call the Government's action "political meddling," and that both have been put in the middle of the page, is the most eloquent proof of it—that they have been inspired by persons aggrieved by the action of the Government.

What was the object of him who has inspired them? Was it to create public opinion against the action of the Government? If it was, does this person think that the Department of Justice will drop the suit?

HARRISON'S REPORTS desires merely to call the attention of the Department of Justice to this editorializing coincidence of these Hollywood papers.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING****Vol. XX****SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1938****No. 33**

## A SIGNIFICANT HOLLYWOOD OPINION ON THE QUALITY OF THE PICTURES

In his editorial column, which appeared in the July 13 issue of *The Hollywood Reporter*, W. R. Wilkerson wrote partly as follows:

"Returns on most of the very 'big' pictures made by this industry in the past eighteen months seem to indicate the public is no longer interested in 'big' pictures, because it has found them uninteresting and possessing less real entertainment than most pictures made at a lower budget.

"Which gives this column the idea that the best days of this industry are over—that is, the best days for producers, writers and directors to glorify themselves with the production of artistic triumphs. And those same producers, writers and directors must now take their glory on RESULTS—from the production of a commodity that will give the public the entertainment it seeks, deodorized entirely from any artistic odor or class appeal. . . ."

It is a well known fact that in some studios a director is not considered a good director unless he spends on a picture more than one million dollars. The picture's quality or box office merit is of no consequence; it is what the director spends on a picture that counts, so far as his personal reputation is concerned.

I have heard of cases where directors who tried to economize and thus deliver entertaining pictures at lower cost were ostracized by some people at the studio. And the reason for it is that, since they themselves were connected with the making of high-cost pictures, they feared lest the low-cost director would "show them up." And that would not do.

In almost every studio there is a clique that runs things, and any one who does not go with the "gang" is given the "works." And no director, and no unit producer, would want to go up against the "gang." Consequently, he plays along with them.

Whether there has been any change lately or not I cannot say; but it is hard to go against an organized bunch of incompetent people, who maintain their positions and their high salaries by over-awing the majority, and even those who employ them. There is an understanding between the cliques of the different studios and woe to him who would incur the ill will of the clique leaders in any one of the studios.

Can the system change? It is doubtful! The caste system, the relatives and the other incompetents, have too strong a hold on the running of the studios to be displaced. The bosses of most studios are in the east. And they themselves know less than the Hollywood incompetents. How can any one clean up a business unless he is familiar with all its phases, able to know who is capable in his line of work and who incapable?

The only chance of changing the system lies in decentralizing production and in making each unit responsible for its own output. When a producer or a director continues making poor pictures, in entertainment as well as in box-office results, then his incompetence is self-evident. Such producers should, then, be let go. There are so many young fellows in Holly-

wood who want a chance to do things that filling the places of the incompetents should not be a difficult job.

This year more than any other year you must be careful what prices you agree to pay for your pictures, for there is going to be a continued lowering of the quality. Now and then a big picture will come out that may "knock them dead." But such pictures will be few and far between; the majority of them will be culls—more numerous than the culls of other years.

Be careful!

## SOUND ADVICE

Stressing the importance of the White House conference between the President of the United States and representatives of the major companies, and admonishing the major companies not to "muff" this opportunity of settling the industry problems and of bringing peace and harmony among its component elements. Red Kann, editor-in-chief of *Box Office*, makes the following significant remarks:

"... It is to be assumed because the assumption becomes quickly obvious that the majors appreciate the truce is temporary; that, while nothing has been officially proclaimed, it may be expected the various arms of the Government will rest on their oars until the trial period has come and gone and the industry has demonstrated that the capability it has announced will be met by a full measure of results; that, in effect, the industry is again in the dead center of a large and piercingly bright spotlight, its every action clearly etched, its every move in the direction of its pledged objective under scrutiny.

"This is the opportunity which the more enlightened among the trade's leaders have been seeking. They must not muff it. They must not proceed half way. Nothing less than all the way will suffice. They must recognize the component elements of the industry—the rights of each, of the majorities certainly, of the minorities very assuredly. . . ."

Wiser words have never been spoken to the major producers. But will they heed them? Some of them will; but are these strong enough to convince the others—the majority, that genuine reforms must be made? Will the ones who operate theatres in the small towns be willing to give them up—get out of places where they have no business to be? Peace in the industry will, after all, depend on the sacrifices those who have will be willing to make. And disposing of their theatre holdings in the small towns will be one of the first sacrifices that they will be asked to make.

Giving up their theatre holdings in the small towns does not mean turning them over to their friends under a gentlemen's agreement; it means severing all connections with such theatres—turning them over to individual exhibitors, who will become part and parcel of the community's life. For unless a sincere and candid severance of relationship with such theatres is effected, it is unlikely that the independent owners will want to abandon the program of relief which they have been following for the last ten years, and which is just beginning to bear fruit.

Red Kann has given the major companies a sound piece of advice. We shall soon know whether they have taken it or not.



**"A Desperate Adventure"**  
**with Ramon Novarro, Marian Marsh**  
**and Margaret Tallichet**

(*Republic, Aug. 15; time, 65 min.*)

Despite a good production and capable performances, this is just a moderately entertaining comedy; the fault lies in the trite story. On occasion, the situations and dialogue provoke laughter, but for the most part the constant talk tends to tire one. The romance is routine; as a matter of fact the story is developed without one new twist:—

Ramon Novarro, an artist, is amazed when, at the Artists' Ball, he finds a girl (Marian Marsh) who was identical to a beautiful picture he had painted from his own imagination. Since his portrait represented the ideal of womanhood, he promptly falls in love with Miss Marsh; but she repulses him, for she was in love with Tom Rutherford, her fiance. Novarro is furious when he learns that his friends had stolen the portrait from his studio and had taken it to a gallery for exhibition; he tries to get it back, but in vain, for it had already been sold. In the meantime, Miss Marsh's father (Andrew Tombes) sees the portrait and is shocked when he sees his daughter's resemblance to the semi-nude figure; he, too, tries to buy it. Learning that it was being shipped to New York, Tombes, together with Miss Marsh, his other daughter (Margaret Tallichet), and Rutherford books passage on the same ship; and so does Novarro. Miss Tallichet falls in love with Novarro, but he has eyes only for Miss Marsh, who eventually succumbs to his attentions. Novarro throws what he thinks is the portrait into the ocean; but when, at the end of the voyage, his portrait shows up, he knows he had thrown the wrong one away. Miss Marsh accuses him of having fooled her and breaks her engagement to him. Novarro is happy for he had suddenly realized that it was Miss Tallichet whom he loved.

Hans Kraly and M. Coates Webster wrote the story, and Barry Trivers, the screen play; John H. Auer directed and produced it. In the cast are Eric Blore, Maurice Cass, Erno Verebes, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Smashing the Rackets"**  
**with Chester Morris, Frances Mercer**  
**and Bruce Cabot**

(*RKO, Aug. 19; time, 69 min.*)

A good action melodrama, centering around the efforts of a special prosecutor to break up rackets and racketeering gangs. It is fast-moving and exciting, holding one in suspense throughout. A romance and a by-plot involving the heroine's sister have been worked into the story; they are the weakest points, for the main attraction is the interesting method employed by the hero in getting his facts and cleaning up racketeering. Chester Morris gives a good performance, making the part of the special prosecutor convincing and realistic:—

Morris resigns from the Federal Investigating Bureau, where he had done excellent work, to become an Assistant District Attorney. After hard work, he realizes he had been appointed merely because of his reputation and that he would not be given a chance to do any real work. Disgusted, he is ready to resign; but one of the men urges him to have patience and wait for his chance. When the young son of an old friend is killed by racketeers

because his father refused to join the "protective association," Morris is determined to do something about racketeering. He forces the District Attorney to permit him to handle the matter. His work so impresses the officials, that he is appointed Special Prosecutor. Fearless and hard-working, he gets the facts against the racketeers together and is ready to arrest Bruce Cabot, on a charge of murder as well as of racketeering. But Cabot informs him that he had better release him, for he knew and had evidence to prove that the sister (Rita Johnson) of Morris' fiancée (Frances Mercer), had killed a man in his country lodge. Realizing that she would ruin the lives of her sister and Morris, Miss Johnson kills herself. Morris is, therefore, free to proceed against Cabot; he breaks up racketeering and obtains convictions against the gangsters. After marrying Miss Mercer, he goes into private law practice.

Forrest Davis wrote the story, and Lionel Houser, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and B. P. Fineman produced it. In the cast are Edward Pawley, Joseph DeStefani, Kay Sutton, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Adult fare. Class B.

**"Crime Over London"**  
**with Margot Grahame and Paul Cavanagh**  
*(Gaumont-British, Aug. 15; time, 62 min.)*

Just a moderately entertaining program melodrama. The production values are poor—the photography, as well as the sound, is bad in spots, and the continuity is choppy owing to bad editing. At times the action is so involved that some spectators may not know what it is all about; as a matter of fact, the story is far-fetched, and it is not helped along much either by the acting or the direction. Except for the closing scenes, in which the gangsters are caught, the action is not particularly exciting.

In the development of the plot, American gangsters, headed by Basil Sydney, invade London, waiting for the opportunity to make a large haul. While walking through a large department store in London, one of the gangsters addresses familiarly the supposed owner of the store, calling him by a different name; the supposed owner denies knowing him. But later when they are alone, the supposed owner admits to the gangster that he was the man he knew, but that, because of his striking resemblance to the real owner, he had been employed to take his place in the store while the real owner went out to play golf, without any one knowing about it. This gives Sydney an idea for a big "job." On the day that the store was to have its 25th Jubilee, at which time gifts of money would be passed out to the employees, Sydney and his gang kidnap the real owner and force his double to take his place. Their plan was to steal all the money and escape. But their plans are foiled by Paul Cavanaugh, Scotland Yard Inspector, who had found out about the trick in time to stop it, and to arrest the gangsters. This arrest helps him absolve the department store owner's nephew of a murder charge, leaving the way clear for him to marry.

Louis DeWohl wrote the story, Alfred Zeisler directed it, and Marcel Hellman produced it. In the cast are Rene Ray, Bruce Lester, David Burns, and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.



**"Painted Desert" with George O'Brien**  
(*RKO, Aug. 12; time 59 min.*)

With a better than average story, this western should do well where outdoor pictures are popular. This time the action moves away from cattle ranches to mining land. It has the ingredients that the fans like—fast riding, fist fights, and exciting encounters between the hero and the villain; and the closing scenes, where the villain blows up the mine belonging to the hero, are thrilling. Comedy, romance, and music are blended in with the melodrama:—

Fred Kohler, Sr. forces Lloyd Ingraham to sell him his rights to an ore mine located on O'Brien's range land; one of Kohler's henchmen later kills Ingraham. O'Brien, knowing that the mine contained precious ore, which Kohler did not know, buys the deed from Kohler, and then infuriates him by telling him of the mine's value. Loraine Johnson, Ingraham's grand-daughter, unaware of the sale of the mine, arrives at the premises to work it. Instead of telling her that he owned it, O'Brien makes her a business proposition for a partnership, agreeing to invest \$50,000 to start the mine going. He borrows the money from the bank, for which he gives notes; the banker immediately turns the notes over to Kohler, who wanted to prevent O'Brien from working the mine so that he could take it over. Things look bad for a time; Kohler and his men blow up the mine. But O'Brien had mined enough ore with which to pay the notes and start the mine going again. He and Miss Johnson marry.

Jack Cunningham wrote the story, and John Rathmell and Oliver Drake, the screen play; David Howard directed it, and Bert Gilroy produced it. In the cast are Stanley Fields, Maude Allen, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Time Out for Murder"**  
**with Michael Whalen and Gloria Stuart**  
(*20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Sept. 23;*  
*time, 59 min.*)

This is the first production of "The Roving Reporter" series; it is a good program murder mystery melodrama, fast-moving and exciting. In spite of the fact that the story is not always plausible, it holds one's attention throughout and keeps one guessing as to the murderer's identity. There is plentiful comedy, wise-cracking, and a hint at a romance that probably will be further developed in the pictures to come in this series.

In the development of the plot, Michael Whalen, a newspaper reporter, covers a murder case in which Robert Kellard, a young bank messenger, was being held as the murderer. He is annoyed when, in the midst of his work, he is bothered by Gloria Stuart, a collection agent, who demands payment of bills that he owed. She decides to help him get the information he needed. As his interest in the case develops, Whalen comes to the conclusion that Kellard was not the guilty person; instead, he suspects Douglas Fowley, a well-known racketeer and old friend of his. But Fowley denies knowing the murder victim. Whalen breaks him down, however, and he admits knowing the girl but denies having committed the murder; instead, he involves Matthews, Kellard's uncle, a bank official, who had been supporting the murdered girl.

But Matthews, too, denies having committed the murder. Eventually, after an exciting holdup in which Miss Stuart had innocently become involved, the murderer is caught; he was an ex-convict and former husband of the murdered woman. When she had refused to pay him blackmail money, he had killed her. Kellard is freed. Whalen proposes to Miss Stuart; but she tells him she might consider it at a later date, after he learns how to pay bills.

Irving Reis wrote the story, and Jerry Cady, the screen play; H. Bruce Humberstone directed it, and Howard J. Green produced it. In the cast are Chick Chandler, Jane Darwell, June Gale, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"The Crowd Roars" with Robert Taylor,**  
**Maureen O'Sullivan, Edward Arnold**  
**and Frank Morgan**

(*MGM, August 5; time, 89½ min.*)

Very good entertainment. This is one picture that Taylor has appeared in that will appeal to men as well as to women, for, in addition to the romantic angle, it gives Taylor a chance to appear as a real he-man, a prizefighter. Although the story is more or less routine, it has been developed in so exciting a manner, that it holds one's attention throughout. The prize-fight scenes are thrilling, particularly the bout in the end. There is plentiful comedy and human appeal; and the romance is charming:—

Taylor develops into a good fighter, under the careful training of Lionel Stander, former trainer to William Gargan, with whom Taylor, as a boy, had travelled in a vaudeville act. But most of his money goes to pay the gambling and drinking debts incurred by his father (Frank Morgan). His patience is exhausted when his father sells his contract to Edward Arnold, a big-time gambler. He tells him never to speak to him again. In a bout with Gargan, who was trying to make a comeback, Taylor tries to throw the fight to him; but one punch knocks Gargan down, and he dies. With the memory of his old friend haunting him, he finds it impossible to fight, but, not being able to get a job, he goes back to the ring. Since no one knew that Arnold was his manager, Taylor agrees to a plan whereby he and Arnold could make a great deal of money; part of this money is turned over to Gargan's widow. Taylor meets and falls in love with Arnold's daughter (Maureen O'Sullivan), who thought her father was a respectable business man. Taylor takes Morgan back again. But Morgan, while drunk, blurts out the whole arrangement with Arnold to Nat Pendleton, a gambler, who had lost large sums of money betting against Taylor. Pendleton's men kidnap Morgan and Miss O'Sullivan and send a note to Taylor that, unless he threw the big fight that night, they would kill both captives. But Morgan sacrifices his life in order to help Miss O'Sullivan escape; she rushes to the ring and cheers Taylor on to win. After that bout, Taylor retires and marries Miss O'Sullivan.

George Bruce wrote the story, and Thomas Lennon, George Bruce, and George Oppenheimer, the screen play; Richard Thorpe directed it, and Sam Zimbalist produced it.

Suitability, Class A.



## JUST TO KEEP THE RECORD STRAIGHT

In the editorial page of the July 9 issue of *Motion Picture Herald*, Mr. Martin Quigley says partly:

"The constructively minded majority will view with interested anticipations the formation of the Distributors' Committee to deal with relations between Distribution and Exhibition—in official words: 'for the solution of such trade problems as are still matters of contention.'

"The procedure has the normal, reasonable aspects of operation in an industry which has so long, and on the whole so successfully, tended to its own business by interior regulations and disciplines.

"It is inevitable, in an industry so filled with competitions and complexities of function and mechanism as this, that there must be from time to time interludes of both adjustment and readjustment. . . ."

HARRISON'S REPORTS begs leave to differ with Mr. Quigley in regards to his belief that the procedure of having selected a producer committee to deal with distributor-exhibitor relations "has the normal, reasonable aspects of operation in an industry which has . . . tended to its own business by interior regulations and disciplines." The producer-distributor leaders of this industry have never done anything voluntarily, with the constructive purpose of weeding out injustices, or erroneous industry policies.

The motion picture industry applied self-regulation on two different subjects: conciliation of disputes, and cleansing the screen.

The first, that is, arbitration, was so prostituted by the producers themselves that it became necessary for the United States Government to bring suit against them. Need I remind him that the United States Supreme Court, to which they appealed from the decision of the lower court, found them guilty of having imposed it on the exhibitors by compulsion?

As to the second, that is, cleansing the screen, this was not a voluntary act on their part; for it was not until after the Catholic Church revolted and threatened boycott against the entire industry that the producers were induced to accept self-criticism of scenarios as well as of finished pictures.

Several attempts were made after the outlawing of arbitration and of credit committees to find a way of composing industry disagreements and of settling disputes. Meetings were held between exhibitor and producer-distributor representatives, but even though agreements were made the producers did nothing to put them into effect.

As far as the present efforts to compose differences by some plan to be agreed upon by exhibitor and producer-distributor representatives is concerned, Mr. Quigley knows very well, just as do a few others, what has brought about the sudden producer-distributor desire. Need we go into details?

There is nothing to be gained by telling the world that the producers have been fair and reasonable and willing to listen to the exhibitor grievances. The files of the courts in the many cases that have been brought against them either by independent exhibitors or by the United States Government give in minute detail the abuses that they have practiced for so many years against the independent exhibitors. As a matter of fact, they, particularly those that own theatres, have done everything imaginable to make the lot of the independent theatre owner unhappy.

Why not face the facts and tell the producers that they have been very obstinate, and that the time has come when they have to do right? Perhaps it will be easier than to agree upon a real program of conciliation.

By this I don't mean to convey the impression that the exhibitors in all instances have been angels, but I

do say this: where the exhibitors have done to the producer-distributors injustices in "pennies," the producer-distributors have done injustices to the exhibitors and to the American public in millions. All the abuses the exhibitors have practiced against the producer-distributors since the industry has come into being do not come up even to a small degree to the abuses the producer-distributors have practiced against the exhibitors, not to mention the American public, from which they have taken at least two billions of dollars and given "wall paper" in return.

## TELEVISION NOT AN ENEMY BUT A FRIEND

For a long time a large number of exhibitors dreaded the perfection of television; they felt that it would not be very long before television would outmode the picture theatres, forcing them to go out of business. Some of the exhibitors went so far as to state that soon pictures would be shown in each time-zone simultaneously. In such an event, they said, the company that would control television would control also the theatres; and since exhibition would be standardized, there would no longer be any room for the individual exhibitors.

On the evening of May 31, the National Broadcasting Company televised the first feature motion picture, "The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel." Dr. Alfred N. Goldsmith, formerly vice president of the Radio Corporation of America and now conducting his own office as a consulting engineer, who is one of the foremost television experts in the world, invited me to see the performance at his home.

Before the motion picture was thrown upon the television screen there was televised an act, picked up from the stage of the television studio of the N.B.C.

The reproduction of the act was far superior to that of the motion picture: The voices of the actors were clear, the picture in excellent detail, and the fade-ins and the fade-outs were done with the same ease as are done in regular motion pictures. But the reproduction of the motion picture lacked in many of these advantages. For instance, the picture was not so clear as that of the act; most of the time an adjustment had to be made in the focusing apparatus. Individual scenes were too dark or too light; and much detail was lost. And the voices were not so crisp and distinct.

The size of the picture was 7½" x 10", and could be conveniently viewed from 4 to 8 feet from the receiver.

Dr. Goldsmith told me that an 18" x 24" picture is given by the largest of the newer television sets, but the cost is between \$800 and \$900, whereas the sets with a 7½" x 10" picture cost around \$400 or less.

The largest size picture attainable at present is, as Dr. Goldsmith informed me, 6 feet by 8 feet, but the cost and size of a set giving so large a picture is enormous, and not practicable for home purposes, or for that matter for general theater use. Further, these large pictures up to the present have a coarser appearance with considerably less detail and brilliance than a motion picture.

My impression from the attendance of this television performance is that television, when it is perfected with larger screens, may be employed as an added attraction in theatres (and perhaps principally for special news events or unusual short subjects) and not as the main attraction; and when used as an added attraction it should help business considerably.

The quality, size, and brightness of the motion picture screen remains unchallenged by television, not to mention the future film possibilities of color features, three-dimensional pictures, and directional sound, which follows the actors around the screen.

HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to say that, judging from present indications, the exhibitor has nothing to fear from the improvement of television.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

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8212 Pioneer Trail—All Star west. (55 min.)	July 15
8025 Reformatory—Jack Holt-F. Darrow	July 21
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Three on a Week-End—Lockwood-Lodge	July 1
Evergreen—Reissue	July 15
Strange Boarders—Walls-Saint Cyr	Aug. 1
Crime Over London—Grahame-Cavanaugh	Aug. 15
Men With 100 Faces—Walls-Palmer	Sept. 1
The 39 Steps—Reissue	Sept. 15
The Lady Vanishes—Lockwood-Lukas	Oct. 1

## Grand National Features

(1270 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y.)

219 International Crime—LaRocque-Allwyn	Apr. 22
221 Whirlwind Horsemen—Maynard	Apr. 29
224 Six Shootin' Sheriff—Ken Maynard	May 21
223 Life Returns—Wilson-Stevens	June 10
222 Held For Ransom—Mehaffey-Withers	June 17
225 I Married a Spy—Neil Hamilton	July 1
226 Rollin' Plains—Tex Ritter	July 8
227 I Command—Lionel Atwill	July 15
228 Renfrew on the Great White Trail—Newill	July 22
229 The Utah Trail—Tex Ritter	Aug. 12

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

832 Three Comrades—Taylor-Sullivan-Tone	June 3
836 The Toy Wife—Rainer-Douglas-Young	June 10
838 Woman Against Woman—Bruce-Marshall	June 17
403 Treasure Island—Reissue	June 17
837 Lord Jeff—Bartholomew-Rooney	June 24
829 Port of Seven Seas—Beery-F. Morgan	July 1
839 Fast Company—Douglas-Rice	July 8
835 Shopworn Angel—Sullivan-Stewart	July 15
841 Love Finds Andy Hardy—Rooney-Stone	July 22
533 David Copperfield—Reissue	July 22
842 The Chaser—O'Keefe-Morris	July 29
840 The Crowd Roars—Taylor-O'Sullivan (re)	Aug. 5
Rich Man, Poor Girl—Young-Ayres-Hussey	Aug. 12
Block-Heads—Laurel-Hardy-Ellis	Aug. 19

## Monogram Features

(1270 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y.)

3722 Telephone Operator—Allen-White (61 m.)	Jan. 12
3727 West of Rainbow's End—McCoy (57 min.)	Jan. 19
3724 Saleslady—Nagel-Heyburn	Jan. 27
3736 Where the West Begins—Randall (54 min.)	Feb. 3
3719 My Old Kentucky Home—Venable-Hall (r)	Feb. 16
3733 The Painted Trail—Tom Keene (50m) (r)	Feb. 23



3725 Port of Missing Girls—Allen-Carey (r)...Mar. 2  
 3728 Code of the Rangers—Tim McCoy (56 m.)...Mar. 9  
 3715 Rose of the Rio Grande—Movita (r).....Mar. 16  
 3739 Land of Fighting Men—Randall (53 min.)...Apr. 11  
 3713 Female Fugitive—Venable-Reynolds .....Apr. 15  
 3729 Two Gun Justice—Tim McCoy (57m) (re)...Apr. 30  
 3740 Gun Smoke Trail—J. Randall (56m) (r)...May 8  
 3709 Numbered Woman—Blane .....May 22  
 3730 Phantom Ranger—Tim McCoy (53m).....May 29  
 3712 Marines Arc Herc—Travis-Oliver .....June 8  
 3702 Romance of the Limberlost—Parker .....June 22  
 3742 Man's Country—Jack Randall (55 min.)...July 6  
 3741 Last Frontier—Jack Randall (reset) .....Sept. 7  
*(End of 1937-38 Season)*

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

Barefoot Boy—Moran-Fain-Windsor .....Aug. 3  
 Circus Comes to Town—Main-Nagel .....Aug. 31

### Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

3738 Stolen Heaven—Raymond-Bradna .....May 13  
 3740 Cocoonut Grove—MacMurray-Hilliard .....May 20  
 3741 Hunted Men—Nolan-Carlisle-Overman ....May 27  
 No release set for .....June 3  
 3742 You and Me—Raft-Sidney-MacLane .....June 10  
 3743 Prison Farm—Ross-Nolan-Howard .....June 17  
 3758 Bar 20 Justice—Wm. Boyd-Gaze .....June 24  
 No release set for .....July 1  
 No release set for .....July 15  
 3744 Tropic Holiday—Lamour-Burns-Raye .....July 22  
 3745 Booloo—Tapley-Lanc .....July 22  
 3746 Professor Beware—Lloyd-Welch .....July 29  
 3747 Bulldog Drummond in Africa—Howard....Aug. 5  
 3748 The Texans—Scott-Bennett-Robson .....Aug. 12  
 3749 Give Me a Sailor—Raye-Hope (reset).....Aug. 19  
 3750 Spawn of the North—Raft-Fonda-Lamour..Aug. 26  
*(End of 1937-38 Season)*

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

3854 Pride of the West—Wm. Boyd-Hayes.....July 8  
 3801 Sing You Sinners—Crosby-MacMurray ....Sept. 2  
 3855 In Old Mexico—Wm. Boyd-Hayes .....Sept. 9  
 Sons of the Legion—O'Connor-Lee .....Sept. 16  
 Arkansas Traveler—Burns-Carlisle .....Sept. 23  
 Campus Confessions—Luisetti-Grable .....Sept. 30

### Republic Features

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

7008 Prison Nurse—Wilcoxon-Marsh .....Mar. 29  
 7116 Outlaws of Sonora—Three Mesq. (55m.) ...Apr. 11  
 7009 King of the Newsboys—Ayres-Mack .....Apr. 15  
 7126 The Feud Maker—Bob Steele (55m.) .....Apr. 18  
 7022 Arson Gang Busters—Livingston .....Apr. 25  
 7010 Invisible Enemy—Marshall-Correll .....May 2  
 7011 Call of the Yukon—Arlen-Roberts .....May 16  
 7012 Romance on the Run—Woods-Ellis .....June 8  
 7004 Gangs of New York—Bickford-Dvorak ....June 13  
 7127 Desert Patrol—Steele (56m.) .....June 27  
 7117 Riders of the Black Hill—3 Mesq. (55m.) ...July 6  
 7012 Ladies in Distress—Skipworth-Moran .....July 11  
 7002 Army Girl—Evans-Foster .....July 28  
 7103 Gold Mine in the Sky—Autry (60 min.)....Aug. 1  
 7118 Heroes of the Hills—Three Mesq. ....Aug. 1  
 Come on Leathernecks—Cromwell-Hunt ...Aug. 8  
 A Desperate Adventure—Novarro-Marsh....Aug. 15  
 Man From Music Mountain—Gene Autry...Aug. 15  
 Tenth Avenue Kid—Cabot-Roberts .....Aug. 22  
 Home Sweet Home—Gleason family .....Aug. 29

### RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y.)

871 Little Women—Reissue .....July 8  
 835 Sky Giant—Dix-Morris-Fontaine .....July 22  
 833 Mother Carey's Chickens—Shirley-Ellison-  
 Bainter-Albertson .....July 29  
 834 I'm From the City—Joe Penner.....Aug. 5  
 883 Painted Desert—George O'Brien .....Aug. 12  
 832 Smashing the Rackets—Morris-Mercer .....Aug. 19  
 845 Breaking the Ice—Breen-Ruggles .....Aug. 26

### Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

843 Island in the Sky—Stuart-Whalen .....Apr. 1  
 842 Rawhide—Ballew-Gehrig-Knapp .....Apr. 8  
 840 In Old Chicago—Power-Faye-Amche .....Apr. 15  
 845 Battle of Broadway—MacLaglen-Hovick ....Apr. 22  
 848 Four Men and a Prayer—Young-Greene ....Apr. 29  
 847 A Trip to Paris—Prouty-Deane .....May 6  
 874 Life Begins at Forty—Rogers reissue .....May 6  
 844 Kentucky Moonshine—Ritz Brothers .....May 13  
 849 Rascals—Withers-Hudson-Wilcox .....May 20  
 846 Kidnapped—Baxter-Bartholomew-Whelan ...May 27  
 839 Josette—Ameche-Simon-Young .....June 3  
 850 One Wild Night—Lang-Baldwin-Talbot ....June 10  
 851 Three Blind Mice—Young-McCrea .....June 17  
 819 Mr. Moto Takes a Chance—Lorre-Hudson ..June 24  
 852 Always Goodbye—Stanwyck-Marshall .....July 1  
 857 We're Going to Be Rich—Fields-McLaglen ..July 8  
 853 Panamint's Bad Man—Ballew-Beery-Daw ...July 8  
 854 Passport Husband—Erwin-Moore-Fowley ...July 15  
 855 I'll Give a Million—Baxter-Weaver .....July 22  
 856 Little Miss Broadway—Temple-Murphy.....July 29  
*(End of 1937-38 Season)*

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

901 Gateway—Ameche-Whelan-Talbot-Ratoff ...Aug. 5  
 902 Keep Smiling—Winters-Stuart-Wilcoxon ...Aug. 12  
 903 Alexander's Ragtime Band—Power-Faye .....Aug. 19  
 904 Speed to Burn—Whalen-Bari-Armetta .....Aug. 26  
 905 My Lucky Star—Henie-Greene-Davis .....Sept. 2  
 906 Safety in Numbers—Prouty-Deane .....Sept. 9  
 907 Hold That Co-Ed—J. Barrymore-Weaver ...Sept. 16

### United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Adventures of Marco Polo—Cooper-Gurie .....Apr. 15  
 Divorce of Lady X—Oberon-Olivier .....Apr. 15  
 The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel—Stewart-  
 Scott-Lister .....Apr. 29  
 Count of Monte Cristo—Reissue .....May 13  
 I Cover the Waterfront—Reissue .....May 13  
 Blockade—Fonda-Carroll-Carrillo .....June 17  
 South Riding—Best-Richardson .....July 1  
*(End of 1937-38 Season)*

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

Algiers—Boyer-Gurie-Lamarr (reset) .....Aug. 5  
 The Young in Heart—Gaynor-Fairbanks, Jr. (r)...Sept. 9  
 There Goes My Heart—March-Bruce (reset)....October

### Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

A2027 Lady in the Morgue—Foster-Ellis .....Apr. 22  
 A2011 Sinners in Paradise—Boles-Evans .....May 6  
 A2038 Air Devils—Wallace-Blake-Purcell .....May 13  
 A3071 All Quiet on the Western Front—Reissue  
 (87 min.) .....May 15  
 A3072 Frankenstein—Reissue (71 min.) .....May 15  
 A3073 Love Before Breakfast—Reissue (71m.) ...May 15  
 A3074 Lady Tubbs—Reissue (70 min.) .....May 15  
 A2009 The Devil's Party—McLaglen-Wilcox ....May 20  
 A2010 Wives Under Suspicion—William .....June 3  
 A2058 Western Trails—Bob Baker (57 min.)....June 3  
 A2059 Outlaw Express—Bob Baker (56 min.)....June 17  
 A2039 Young Fugitives—Kent-Wilcox .....June 17  
 A2032 Danger on the Air—Woods-Grey .....July 1  
 A2005 Rage of Paris—Darrieux-Fairbanks, Jr....July 1  
 A2028 Prison Break—Farrell-MacLane (re) ....July 15  
 A2008 Little Tough Guy—Wilcox-Parish .....July 22  
 Letter of Introduction—Leeds (re).....Aug. 5  
 Dark Rapture—Dennis-Roosevelt Exp.....Aug. 12  
 The Missing Guest—Kelly-Moore .....Aug. 12  
 That Certain Age—Durbin-Cooper-Rich...Aug. 19  
*(End of 1937-38 Season)*

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

3057 Strawberry Roan—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
 3058 Fiddlin' Buckaroo—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
 3059 King of the Arena—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
 3060 Honor of the Range—Maynard reissue.....Aug. 15  
 3061 Smoking Guns—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
 3062 Gun Justice—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
 Freshman Year—Dunbar-Truex .....Sept. 2  
 Youth Takes a Fling—McCrea-Leeds.....Sept. 9



## Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 208 White Banners—Rains-Bainter-Cooper ..... June 25  
215 Men Are Such Fools—Morris-P. Lane (r)..... July 2  
217 Cowboy From Brooklyn—Powell-O'Brien.... July 16  
227 Mr. Chump—Davis-L. Lane-Singleton ..... Aug. 6  
205 (213) Racket Busters—Bogart-Brent (r).... Aug. 13  
213 Boy Meets Girl—Cagney-O'Brien ..... Aug. 27

## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

- 8859 Screen Snapshots No. 9—(9½m.) ..... Apr. 29  
8553 Friendly Neighbors—Around the World  
in Color (9½ min.) ..... Apr. 29  
8658 Community Sing No. 8—(10½m.) ..... May 6  
8808 Sport Stamina—World of Sport (9½m.) ... May 10  
8508 The Big Birdcast—Col. Rhapsody (7m.) ... May 13  
8705 Krazy Magic—Krazy Kat (6½m.) ..... May 20  
8860 Screen Snapshots No. 10—(9½m.) ..... May 27  
8509 Window Shopping—Col. Rhapsody (7½m.)... June 3  
8809 Thrilling Moments—W. of Sport (10m.) ... June 10  
8659 Community Sing No. 9—(8½m.) ..... June 25  
8810 Fistic Fun—World of Sport (9½ min.).... July 1  
8510 Poor Little Butterfly—Col. Rhap. (8 m.).... July 4  
8706 Krazy's Travel Squawks—K. Kat (6½ m.)... July 4  
8660 Community Sing No. 10—(9½ min.)..... July 4  
8861 Screen Snapshots No. 11—(10½ min.).... July 8  
8758 City Slicker—Scrappys (reset) ..... July 22  
8511 Poor Elmer—Color Rhapsody (7 min.).... July 22  
8862 Screen Snapshots No. 12—(9½ min.) ..... July 29  
8811 Athletic Youth—World of Sport ..... July 29  
8512 The Frog Pond—Color Rhapsody ..... Aug. 12  
8812 Demons of the Deep—World of Sport..... Aug. 19  
8661 Community Sing No. 11..... Aug. 26  
8662 Community Sing No. 12..... Sept. 15  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Columbia—Two Reels

- 8434 Ankles Away—All Star com. (17½m.) .... May 13  
8170 The Crash—Secret No. 10 (19m.) ..... May 16  
8407 Healthy, Wealthy and Dumb—Stooges  
(16½ min.) ..... May 20  
8171 Dynamite—Secret No. 11 (18½m.) ..... May 23  
8172 Bridge of Doom—Secret No. 12 (19m.) .... May 30  
8435 The Soul of a Heel—All Star com. (16m.)... June 4  
8173 The Mad Flight—Secret No. 13 (19m.) .... June 6  
8174 The Jaws of Destruction—Secret No. 14  
(19 min.) ..... June 13  
8175 Justice—Secret No. 15—(20 min.)..... June 20  
8181 Law of the Gun—The Great Adv. of Wild  
Bill Hickok (28 min.) ..... June 30  
8436 Halfway to Hollywood—All Star (17m).... July 1  
8182 Stampede—Great Adv. #2 (19 min.)..... July 7  
8183 Blazing Terror—Great Adv. #3 (18 m.).... July 14  
8184 Mystery Canyon—Great Adv. #4 (18½ m.)... July 21  
8185 Flaming Brands—Great Adv. #5 (19½ m.)... July 28  
8408 Three Missing Links—Stooges (18 m.).... July 29  
8186 The Apache Killer—Great Adv. #6..... Aug. 4  
8187 Prowling Wolves—Great Adv. #7 ..... Aug. 11  
8188 The Pit—Great Adv. #8 ..... Aug. 18  
8189 Ambushed—Great Adv. #9 ..... Aug. 25  
8190 Savage Vengeance—Great Adv. #10..... Sept. 1  
8191 Burning Waters—Great Adv. #11..... Sept. 8  
8192 Desperation—Great Adv. #12 ..... Sept. 15  
8193 Phantom Bullets—Great Adv. #13 ..... Sept. 22  
8194 The Lure—Great Adv. #14 ..... Sept. 29  
8195 Trails End—Great Adv. #15 ..... Oct. 6  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- W-685 A Day at the Beach—Capt. cart. (10m) .. June 25  
F-756 How to Raise a Baby—Benchley (9m).... July 2  
H-727 Strange Glory—Hist. Mystery (11 min.)... July 2  
S-711 Anaesthesia—Pete Smith (10 min.)..... July 9  
M-680 Tracking the Sleeping Death—  
Miniatures (10 min.) ..... July 9  
W-686 What a Lion—Captain cartoon ..... July 16  
T-662 Paris on Parade—Traveltalks (reset).... July 23  
F-757 The Courtship of the Newt—Benchley  
(8 min.) ..... July 23

- S-712 Follow the Arrow—Pete Smith ..... July 30  
H-728 The Bravest of the Brave—Hist. Myst.... Aug. 6  
W-687 The Pgy my Hunt—Captain cartoon ..... Aug. 6  
C-741 The Little Ranger—Our Gang comedy.... Aug. 6

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- P-614 A Criminal Is Born—Crime Doesn't  
Pay (21 min.) ..... June 25  
R-605 The Magician's Daughter—Mus. (18m).... July 16  
R-606 It's in the Stars—Musical ..... July 30

### Paramount—One Reel

- C7-6 Hunky and Spunky—Color Classic (8½m) .. June 24  
P7-12 Paramount Pictorial #12—(9 min.)..... July 1  
A7-14 Queens of the Air—Headliner (10 m.).... July 8  
J7-6 Popular Science No. 6—(10 m.)..... July 8  
V7-13 Silver Millions—Paraphoric (9½m)..... July 15  
R7-13 Horse Shoes—Sportlight (9 min.) ..... July 15  
E7-12 The Jeep—Popeye (7½ min.) ..... July 15  
T7-12 Buzzy Boop (Pudgy the Watchman)—  
Betty Boop (7½ min.) ..... July 22  
SC7-6 Beside a Moonlit Stream—Screen Song  
(7½ min.) ..... July 29  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- A8-1 Moments of Charm—Headliner (9½ m.)... Aug. 5  
P8-1 Paramount Pictorial #1—(8½ min.)..... Aug. 5  
R8-1 A Sporting Test—Sportlight (9 min.)..... Aug. 5  
L8-1 Unusual Occupations #1—(10 min.) ..... Aug. 5  
V8-1 Tannhauser—Paraphoric ..... Aug. 12  
T8-1 Pudgy the Watchman—Betty Boop ..... Aug. 12  
K8-1 Guatemala—Color Cruises ..... Aug. 12  
E8-1 Bulldozing the Bull—Popeye ..... Aug. 19  
C8-1 All's Fair at the Fair—Color Classic..... Aug. 26

### RKO—One Reel

- 84213 Hockshop Blues—Nu Atlas (10 min.)..... July 15  
84309 Brother Golfers—Sportscope (11 min.).... July 15  
84116 The Fox Hunt—Disney cart. (8 min.).... July 29  
84607 Pathe Parade—(10 min.) ..... Aug. 12  
84117 The Whalers—Disney cart. (8 min.) ..... Aug. 19  
84118 Mickey's Parrot—Disney cart. (8 min.)... Sept. 9  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### RKO—Two Reels

- 83112 March of Time—(17 min.) ..... July 8  
83406 Fool Coverage—E. Kennedy (16 m.)..... July 15  
83503 Russian Dressing—musical (18 m.)..... July 29  
83113 March of Time ..... Aug. 5  
83303 Hunting Trouble—Jed Prouty (16 m.).... Aug. 12  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 8604 Kingdom for a Horse—Treas. Ch. (10m).... Apr. 8  
8518 Robinson Crusoe's Broadcast—T.T. (6½m) . Apr. 15  
8608 Return of the Buffalo—Tr. Ch. (10m)..... Apr. 22  
8519 Maid in China—Terry-Toon (7 min.)..... Apr. 29  
8520 The Big Top—Terry-Toon (6½ min.)..... May 13  
8521 Devil of the Deep—Terry-Toon (6½m).... May 27  
8522 Here's to Good Old Jail—T.Toon (6½m) .. June 10  
8523 The Last Indian—Terry-Toon (6½m)..... June 24  
8524 Milk for Baby—Terry-Toon (6½ min.).... July 8  
8609 We Live In Two Worlds—Tr. Ch. (11m) .. July 22  
8525 Mrs. O'Leary's Cow—Terry-Toon (6½m) .. July 22  
8526 Eliza Runs Again—Terry-Toon (6½m).... July 29  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 9101 Golden California—Road to Romance..... Aug. 5  
9501 Chris Columbo—Terry-Toon ..... Aug. 12  
9201 Recording Modern Science—Cameraman  
(10 min.) ..... Aug. 19  
9521 String Bean Jack—Terry-Toon ..... Aug. 26  
9401 What Every Boy Should Know—Lew Lehr... Sept. 2  
9502 The Goose Flies High—Terry-Toon ..... Sept. 9

### Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- 8310 Winner Lose All—Kemper (19½ min.).... June 17  
(End of 1937-38 Season)



### Universal—One Reel

A2284 The Problem Child—Oswald cart. (7m.) ..May 16  
A2285 Movie Phoney News—Oswald (7m.) .....May 30  
A2395 Stranger Than Fiction No. 51—(9m.) ....June 6  
A2286 Nellie, The Indian Chief's Daughter—  
Oswald cartoon (7 min.) .....June 6  
A2382 Going Places with Thomas No. 51 (10m.)..June 13  
A2396 Stranger Than Fiction No. 52—(9m.) ....June 20  
A2287 Happy Scouts—Oswald cart. (7m.) .....June 20  
A2383 Going Places with Thomas No. 52 (9m.)..June 27  
A2288 Cheese Nappers—Oswald cart. (7m.) ....July 4  
A2289 Voodoo Harlem—Oswald cart. (7 m.)....July 18  
A2290 Silly Seals—Oswald cart. (7½ min.).....July 25  
A2291 Barnyard Romeo—Oswald cart. (7 min.)..Aug. 1  
A2292 Queen's Kittens—Oswald cart. (7 m.)....Aug. 8  
(more to come)

### Universal—Two Reels

A2173 Fits and Benefits—Mentone (19m).....July 27  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

#### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

A3581 The River Runs Red—Flaming Frontiers  
#1 (21 min.) .....July 5  
A3582 Death Rides the Wind—Flam. #2 (21m)..July 12  
A3583 Treachery at Eagle Pass—Fl. #3 (19m) ..July 19  
A3584 A Night of Terror—Flaming #4 (23m)....July 26  
A3585 Blood and Gold—Flaming #5 (21m).....Aug. 2  
A3586 Trapped by Fire—Flaming #6 (21 min.)..Aug. 9  
A3587 The Human Target—Flaming #7 (22m) ..Aug. 16  
A3588 The Savage Horde—Flam. #8 (17½m)....Aug. 23  
A3589 Toll of the Torrent—Flaming #9 (20m) ..Aug. 30  
A3590 In the Claws of the Cougar—Flaming  
#10 (19½ min.) .....Sept. 6

### Vitaphone—One Reel

3713 Carl "Deacon" Moore & Orch.—Melody  
Master (10 min.) .....May 7  
3412 Now That Summer Is Gone—M. Mel. (6m.)..May 14  
3910 The Juggling Fool—Varieties (11m.) .....May 14  
3309 Wanderlust—True Adventures (13m.) ....May 14  
3509 Pearl of the East—Color-Tour (10m.) .....May 21  
3611 Injun Trouble—L. Tunes (7m.) .....May 21  
3714 Freddie Rich & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (11m.)...May 28  
3413 Isle of Pingo Pongo—M. Mel. (8m.) .....May 28  
3310 A Dream Comes True—True Adv. (12m) ..June 4  
3612 Porky the Fireman—Looney Tunes (6m) ..June 4  
3810 Beavers-Polo-Woolens—Pic. Rev. (10m) ..June 4  
3414 Katnip Kollege—Mer. Mel. (7m).....June 11  
3911 Vitaphone Capers—Vit. Var. (9 min.) .....June 18  
3715 Clyde Lucas & Orch.—Mel. Mas. (9m)....June 18  
3415 Have You Got Any Castles—M. Mel. (7m) ..June 25  
3613 Porky's Party—Looney Tunes (7 min.)....June 25  
3512 Isles of Enchantment—Color-Tour (10m) ..June 25  
3311 The Fighting Judge—True. Adv. (13m)....July 2  
3716 Don Bestor & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (9m)....July 9  
3811 Bakelite-Greyhounds-Perfume—Pic. Rev.  
(11 min.) .....July 9  
3416 Love and Curses—Mer. Mel. (8 min.)....July 9  
3614 Porky's Spring Planting—L. Tunes (7m) ..July 16  
3511 Mechanix Illustrated—Color-Tour (10 m.)  
(reset) .....July 23  
3417 Cinderella Meets a Fella—Mer. Mel. (8m) ..July 23  
3312 Night Intruder—True Adventures (11 m.) ..July 23  
3717 Saturday Night Swing Club—Mel. Masters  
(11 min.) .....July 30  
3615 Porky and Daffy—Looney Tunes (7 m.) ....Aug. 6  
3912 Swing Cat's Jamboree—Vit. Var. (8 min.) ..Aug. 6  
3812 Hollywood-Sculling-Furs—Pic. Rev. (10m) ..Aug. 13

### Vitaphone—Two Reels

3022 Under the Wire—Comedy (20m.).....Mar. 26  
3016 Got a Match—Revues (19 m.) .....Apr. 9  
3028 Hold That Ball—Gay-Eties (19 min.)....Apr. 23  
3011 Forget Me Knots—Claire (Tech.) (21 m.) ..May 7  
3023 Stocks & Blondes—Comedy (18 min.)....May 21  
3004 Out Where the Stars Begin—Tech. (19m.) ..May 28  
3012 Prisoner of Swing—Headliner (21m.) ....June 11  
3029 Rise and Sing—Gay-Eties (21m.) .....June 25  
3017 Rainbow's End—Revues (22m.) .....July 2  
3024 My Pop—Henry Armetta (22 min.) .....July 16  
3006 Sons of the Plains—Technicolor (19m)....July 30  
3018 Up In Lights—Pat Rooney (21 min.) .....Aug. 13  
3030 There Goes the Bride—Gayeties (22 m.) ..Aug. 27

## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

### Universal

694 Saturday ...Aug. 20  
695 Wednesday ..Aug. 24  
696 Saturday ...Aug. 27  
697 Wednesday ..Aug. 31  
698 Saturday ...Sept. 3  
699 Wednesday ..Sept. 7  
700 Saturday ...Sept. 10  
701 Wednesday ..Sept. 14  
702 Saturday ...Sept. 17  
703 Wednesday ..Sept. 21  
704 Saturday ...Sept. 24  
705 Wednesday ..Sept. 28  
706 Saturday ....Oct. 1

### Fox Movietone

98 Saturday ....Aug. 20  
99 Wednesday ..Aug. 24  
100 Saturday ...Aug. 27  
101 Wednesday ..Aug. 31  
102 Saturday ...Sept. 3  
103 Wednesday ..Sept. 7  
104 Saturday ...Sept. 10  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

#### 1938-39 Season

1 Wednesday ...Sept. 14  
2 Saturday .....Sept. 17  
3 Wednesday ...Sept. 21  
4 Saturday .....Sept. 24  
5 Wednesday ...Sept. 28  
6 Saturday .....Oct. 1

### Paramount News

5 Saturday .....Aug. 20  
6 Wednesday ...Aug. 24  
7 Saturday .....Aug. 27  
8 Wednesday ..Aug. 31  
9 Saturday ...Sept. 3  
10 Wednesday ..Sept. 7  
11 Saturday ...Sept. 10  
12 Wednesday ..Sept. 14  
13 Saturday ...Sept. 17  
14 Wednesday ..Sept. 21  
15 Saturday ...Sept. 24  
16 Wednesday ..Sept. 28  
17 Saturday .....Oct. 1

### Metrotone News

296 Saturday ...Aug. 20  
297 Wednesday ..Aug. 24  
298 Saturday ...Aug. 27  
299 Wednesday ..Aug. 31  
300 Saturday ...Sept. 3  
301 Wednesday ..Sept. 7  
302 Saturday ...Sept. 10  
303 Wednesday ..Sept. 14  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

#### 1938-39 Season

200 Saturday ...Sept. 17  
201 Wednesday ..Sept. 21  
202 Saturday ...Sept. 24  
203 Wednesday ..Sept. 28  
204 Saturday ....Oct. 1

### Pathe News

95109 Sat. (O.)..Aug. 20  
95210 Wed. (E.)..Aug. 24  
95111 Sat. (O.)..Aug. 27  
95212 Wed. (E.)..Aug. 31  
95113 Sat. (O.)..Sept. 3  
95214 Wed. (E.)..Sept. 7  
95115 Sat. (O.)..Sept. 10  
95216 Wed. (E.)..Sept. 14  
95117 Sat. (O.)..Sept. 17  
95218 Wed. (E.)..Sept. 21  
95119 Sat. (O.)..Sept. 24  
95220 Wed. (E.)..Sept. 28  
95121 Sat. (O.)..Oct. 1



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Room 1812

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1938

No. 34

## A Sick Business Needs More Than a Shot in the Arm

By ABRAM F. MYERS

*General Counsel of Allied States Association*

The plan to raise a million dollars to finance a 120-day campaign to stimulate theatre attendance indicates that the producer-distributor group has finally recognized what the independent exhibitors have long known, namely, that the motion picture business is very sick indeed.

It would be inappropriate for me to discuss that plan for the reason that its authors did not invite the exhibitor associations to play any part therein and, consequently, Allied has taken no position either for or against it. It is proper, however, for me to discuss the underlying causes of the industry's predicament and to suggest additional and more drastic remedies.

A much quoted saying, attributed to Nicholas Schenck, is that the industry can suffer no ill that good pictures will not cure. The reverse of this is that all industry ills result from poor pictures. I think this is too sweeping, but it is applicable to the present situation. All exhibitors with whom I have discussed the matter say that the main reason for the prevailing slump is the falling off in the entertainment value of the pictures. Certainly no amount of ballyhoo could have induced the public to flock to the pictures released during the past six months.

While the poor quality of the pictures is undoubtedly the main cause, there are many contributing causes. One of these is the fact that the distributors, desiring to make the most of their best pictures, have unwittingly made the movies a seasonal recreation whereas they ought to be year-round entertainment. As a result, the public is surfeited with outstanding pictures from late summer until mid-winter and is starved for suitable movie fare for the remainder of the year. So obsessed are some distributors with the notion that pictures will earn big money only in the fall and winter, that they habitually carry over until the succeeding season good pictures which had been promised for spring and summer release and to which the exhibitors are ethically (but not legally) entitled. Good pictures kill each other off in bitter rivalry during a few months of the year and the rest of the time a bored populace yawns and says, "There's nothing at the movies."

Another contributing cause is the fact that, by a combination of circumstances, which the producers could have prevented, the stars have been stripped of all glamour. Commentators, both press and radio, have been allowed the

run of the studios in order that they might pick up gossip or information reflecting on the morals and intelligence of the stars to relate to a gaping world. The public no longer regards the stars as persons apart; it has been taught to look on them as excessively human, of doubtful morals and no ethics, and of very low intelligence. Messrs. Fidler and Skolsky and a host of other omniscient writers have painted the stars as cheap, tawdry and stupid in order that they themselves might appear clever by contrast. Not only that, but the producers have allowed their most valuable stars to take part in radio pre-views of pictures when, due to their lack of experience and skill in that medium and to the haphazard selection of scenes for presentation, the result was clearly calculated to warn the listeners against seeing those pictures. Allied cried out against this folly, but its protests fell on deaf ears. The producers now have a year's experience behind them in the matter of radio pre-views—and the industry is broke.

One of the most important causes of the industry's feebleness is loss of interested and energetic manpower due to the forcing out of many independent exhibitors and the complete regimentation of those who remain. An individual operating his own theatre with the amount of his earnings dependent on the thought and energy which he puts into his business, and with discretionary control over the operating policy of his theatre including the right to select his product, is the most efficient business-builder the industry has ever produced. But this same individual, robbed of all control over his operating policies and with virtually all of his earnings pre-empted by an unwelcome partner, can not be expected to hustle for business, to devise clever exploitation schemes, or to put money into advertising. What incentive is there to put thought and energy into the business, to exercise showmanship, when, in the final analysis, he is working for the distributors as surely as the mousy manager of an affiliated theatre, without the latter's assurance of a Saturday night pay-off?

The arguments against reforming the restrictive and coercive practices of the business, in view of the known facts, are no longer convincing. For years the producer-distributors have beguiled the exhibitors and misled public officials into believing that, because production costs are high, and the speculative element

*(Continued on last page)*



**"Gateway" with Don Ameche  
and Arlene Whelan**

(20th Century-Fox, [1938-39] Aug. 5; 73 min.)

A fair comedy-drama. There is not much to the far-fetched story; but the performances are good and the characterizations interesting, and so one's attention is held fairly well throughout. The best bits are contributed by minor players in small parts; for instance, Gregory Ratoff, as a bogus Russian count, provokes hearty laughs by his put-on manners; Maurice Moscovitch brings tears to one's eyes by his sacrifice for his family, and John Carradine causes excitement when he leads a gang of deportees to rebel. The romance is developed rather poorly; at no time does one feel that the heroine had actually fallen in love with the hero, and so when she accepts his marriage proposal it seems that she was doing so just as a matter of convenience.

In the development of the plot, Don Ameche, a war correspondent on his way back to the United States, travelling first class, spies Arlene Whelan, a second-class passenger, who was on her way to marry her American sweetheart (Lyle Talbot), and falls in love with her. He induces her to join a party on the first class deck. Raymond Walburn, a boresome small-town, wealthy passenger, takes Miss Whelan out on deck and tries to kiss her; she slaps him and he falls down. Walburn's wife lodges a complaint against Miss Whelan. Because of this she is held at Ellis Island, along with some other passengers. Ameche, feeling it was his fault, goes along with her; but she refuses to talk to him. Talbot, accompanied by his brother, attends a hearing and, because of the scandal, refuses to marry Miss Whelan, which meant that she would have to return to Ireland. Desperate, she agrees to escape with Gilbert Roland, a gangster detained for income tax evasion, but Ameche puts a stop to that. A riot breaks out at the Island when deportees try to escape. In the end, peace is restored, and Miss Whelan, realizing she was in love with Ameche, agrees to marry him.

Walter Reisch wrote the story, and Lamar Trotti, the screen play; Alfred Werker directed it, and Samuel G. Engel produced it. In the cast are Harry Carey, Marjorie Gateson, Fritz Leiber, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Give Me a Sailor" with Martha Raye,  
Bob Hope and Betty Grable**

(Paramount, Aug. 19; time, 76 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining slapstick comedy. A few of the situations provoke hearty laughter; the action is, however, for the most part, so silly that it tends to bore instead of amuse the spectator. Martha Raye and Bob Hope work hard, but they are handicapped by trite material and an obvious plot. The occasional musical outbursts are not of much help:

Miss Raye is the ugly duckling of her family; her sister (Betty Grable) is beautiful, refuses to do housework, and is intent on having a good time. Miss Raye is in love with Jack Whiting, a naval officer; but he loves Miss Grable. Bob Hope, Whiting's brother, also is in love with Miss Grable. He feels the only way he could win her would be to get Whiting to marry Miss Raye. But his plan does not work, that is, until

Miss Raye accidentally wins a "beautiful legs" contest; then Whiting notices how pretty she was. He proposes to her and she accepts. But on the wedding day, Miss Raye kisses Whiting for the first time and realizes immediately he was not the man for her; she suddenly knows that it was Hope whom she loved. This is confirmed when she kisses him, and he, too, succumbs to her charms. Miss Grable and Whiting are reunited.

The plot was adapted from the play by Anne Nichols; Doris Anderson and Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Elliott Nugent directed it, and Jeff Lazarus produced it with Paul Jones as associate producer. In the cast are Clarence Kolb, J. C. Nugent, Nana Bryant, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Sing You Sinners" with Bing Crosby,  
Fred MacMurray and Ellen Drew**

(Paramount, [1938-39] Sept. 2; time, 89 min.)

Good! The story is somewhat different from those in which Bing Crosby has recently appeared—that is, there is more of a plot and less crooning. Combining human interest with romance, comedy, and music, it has general appeal. The closing scenes, in which the members of the family watch their horse win a race, is both exciting and comical. The most comical scene is that in which Crosby exchanges betting tickets with a man, winning each time he does so. Young Donald O'Connor, a newcomer, makes an excellent impression; he acts with ease, sings well, and knows how to deliver his lines. There are a few musical numbers, some fair, others good. The romance is routine:—

Because of the fact that his older brother (Bing Crosby), an easy-going dreamer, would not work, Fred MacMurray could not marry his sweetheart (Ellen Drew) because he had to support his mother (Elizabeth Patterson) and his two brothers (Crosby and O'Connor). Crosby finally decides to go to Los Angeles, to try his luck there. With money that he wins at a racetrack, Crosby buys a swap shop and does so well that he sends for his mother and O'Connor. Every one is happy for it meant that MacMurray could finally marry. But when Miss Patterson and O'Connor arrive they find that Crosby had swapped his shop for a race horse and that he was broke. Having received glowing letters from his mother about Crosby's success, MacMurray and Miss Drew arrive unexpectedly to be married there. But when he finds out how things stood, he asks Miss Drew to go back home while he went to work paying off debts. He, Crosby, and O'Connor form a singing trio and entertain at a cafe. In the meantime, they train their horse for a race. Despite the efforts of racketeers to stop O'Connor, who was riding Crosby's horse, from winning, he brings the horse in, a winner. Crosby is ready to give up his job to live on the winnings, but Miss Patterson insists that unless they continued as entertainers, doing steady work, she would leave them. They agree; MacMurray finally marries Miss Drew.

Claude Binyon wrote the story and screen play, and Wesley Ruggles directed and produced it. In the cast are John Gallaudet, William Haade, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Barefoot Boy" with Jackie Moran  
and Marcia Mae Jones**

(*Monogram* [1938-39] *Aug. 3*; time, 63 min.)

An enjoyable family entertainment. The story, which revolves mostly around youngsters, has human appeal, comedy, and, in the closing scenes, plentiful excitement. One feels deep sympathy for Ralph Morgan, who suffers because of the actions of his disrespectful son. This son, effectively played by Bradley Metcalf, is, almost until the end, an unbearable brat; his eventual regeneration, therefore, pleases the spectator. The comedy is provoked by the pranks the children play on each other and by their childish romances:—

When released from prison, where he had served a term for the theft of bonds, a crime of which he was innocent, Morgan is heartbroken to learn that his wife (Claire Windsor) was going to divorce him; his son's contemptuous attitude towards him is another source of disappointment. Morgan insists on taking Bradley to the farm owned by Charles D. Brown and Helen MacKellar, hoping that, under the influence of their boy (Jackie Moran), Bradley would change for the better; but he becomes even worse. Jackie, Bradley, tomboy Marcia Mae Jones, and two other youngsters visit a haunted house; through an accident they find the bonds which Morgan had been accused of stealing. But the criminals arrive, and shoot Jackie; Bradley escapes and rushes for help. He and others arrive in time to capture the crooks and get the bonds. Morgan's name is cleared. His wife decides to drop the divorce action, and Bradley, who had undergone a complete change, begs for forgiveness. Jackie recovers.

John T. Neville wrote the story and screen play, Karl Brown directed it, and E. B. Derr produced it. In the cast are Frank Puglia, Matty Fain, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Boy Meets Girl" with James Cagney,  
Pat O'Brien, Marie Wilson and  
Ralph Bellamy**

(*Warner Bros.*, *Aug. 27*; running time, 86 min.)

This farce, which goes in for good-natured ridiculing of the motion picture business and some of its Hollywood characters, is good entertainment. Considering the popularity of the stage play from which it was adapted, the advance publicity the picture has been receiving, and the fact that this is James Cagney's first appearance since his return to Warners, it should do very well at the box-office, particularly in large down-town theatres. The comedy may, at times, be over the heads of small town audiences. Except for a few dull lapses due to an overabundance of dialogue, the action is fast and amusing. The romance is pleasant:—

James Cagney and Pat O'Brien, two Hollywood major studio writers, refuse to take their work seriously. They play pranks on every one, particularly irritating Dick Foran, a western star, for whom they wrote stories. When Marie Wilson, a studio waitress, faints in the producer's office, later announcing that she was going to have a baby, Cagney and O'Brien hit upon a brilliant idea—as soon as the baby is born he should be starred with Foran. Their plan works and the baby, known as Happy, becomes the sensation of the day. Trouble starts

when Happy gets the measles and Foran catches it from him. The studio is ready to cancel Happy's contract; McHugh, an agent, is glad to turn over to the two writers the contract he held for Happy. Because of a hoax they had played, Cagney and O'Brien are discharged. But they think of another brilliant idea; they telephone to a friend in Europe and instruct him to send a telegram from England offering to buy the studio on condition that Happy was under contract. The scheme works—the studio rehires the two writers, signs the contract, and then finds out about the hoax; but, since the two writers had used Foran's telephone to make the call, Foran is blamed. Miss Wilson decides to marry an Englishman and to take Happy to England to live a normal life. She informs everyone that her husband had been a bigamist and had died.

The plot was adapted from the stage play by Bella and Samuel Spewack; they wrote the screen play. Lloyd Bacon directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are Bruce Lester, Ronald Reagan, and Penny Singleton.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Four's a Crowd" with Errol Flynn,  
Rosalind Russell, Olivia DeHavilland  
and Patric Knowles**

(*Warner Bros.* [1938-39] *Sept. 3*; time, 90 min.)

A fairly good farcical comedy. The story itself is not particularly novel; it is in the different situations and in the individual performances that it derives its comedy. Towards the end, it goes completely wild, and ends up with an extremely amusing scene, where two couples are married by Hugh Herbert, an annoyed Justice of the Peace. Nothing in the story is taken seriously; because of this it lacks human appeal. The comedy in a few situations is forced, thereby slowing up the action. Where nonsensical comedies are liked, this should go over:—

Rosalind Russell, a newspaper reporter, induces Patric Knowles, millionaire newspaper publisher, to reengage Errol Flynn as managing editor. Flynn, who, in the meantime, had become a well known press agent, accepts the job only because it would give him a chance to get to Walter Connolly, an eccentric millionaire, who had refused to become one of his clients. Flynn, as a means of getting to Connolly, plays up to Olivia DeHavilland, Connolly's granddaughter; this enrages Knowles, supposedly her fiance; he discharges Flynn. But Flynn finally gets to Connolly and wins his admiration by the tricks he uses to do so. Miss Russell and Flynn love each other; but he has to continue paying attention to Miss DeHavilland, which annoys Miss Russell. Miss Russell gets some information about Connolly that Flynn does not want published; he appeals to her not to divulge it. Knowles, in an effort to get the facts from her, suggests that they get married that night; she agrees. When Flynn hears of this, he rushes to the same Justice with Miss DeHavilland. Everything is eventually straightened out—Flynn marries Miss Russell, and Knowles marries Miss DeHavilland.

Wallace Sullivan wrote the story, and Casey Robinson and Sig Herzig, the screen play; Michael Curtiz directed it, and David Lewis produced it. In the cast are Melville Cooper, Franklin Pangborn, Herman Bing, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



great, they must have an assured income and that, therefore, such practices as compulsory block booking, blind selling, guarantee and percentage contracts, designated playdates, excessive protection, regulation of admission prices and many other devices for bleeding the exhibitors white and usurping control of their theatres, were justified. We now know that costs are high due mainly to excessive star, directorial and executive salaries and wasteful production methods, and that when, due to depression, income shrinks, retrenchment is made in production values but not in the perquisites and emoluments of the "big shots." The business is speculative, certainly, for the exhibitor as well as the producer, and there is no justification for casting all the risk on the exhibitor as is done in current industry practice.

These conditions are too well known to merit further discussion. They are the corruption that has induced the industry's sleeping sickness. When a man is dying, an injection of strychnine may revive him temporarily. The only purpose of such injection is to prolong life until the disease itself can be treated. Unless a cure for the disease is found and administered, the patient is done for. So with the movies. A million dollars worth of advertising, properly planned, may prolong the industry's life over a critical period. But what will happen after December 31, when the campaign ends? Unless the industry finds a way to produce and release good pictures at prices which the exhibitors and the public can afford to pay, unless it ceases to subsidize a rival form of entertainment by making available to it its most valuable stars, and unless it withdraws from exhibition, curbs its predatory practices, and restores to the exhibitors control over their own theatres, the shot in the arm will wear off and the business will be sicker than ever.

What the industry needs most of all is a good dose of democracy, and it appears that the Governments, both Federal and State, are prepared to administer it. Only the short-sighted monopolists will oppose a course of treatment which, though drastic, will restore the business to its erstwhile health and vigor. Those who attempt to block the march of progress during the next few years are going to be destroyed.

### THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(By An Exhibitor)

Hollywood, that never ending source of choice news items, again astonishes the movie world with Mr. Myron Selznick's profit sharing plan for picture creators and artists.

Mr. Selznick, head of his own talent agency, is going to give those creators and artists for whom he has been extracting fabulous salaries an opportunity of proving just how much their individual and collective names on the screen mean. Already announced to proceed on a no-salary, profit-sharing basis are Ernst Lubitsch, William Powell, Carole Lombard, and Dolly Haas. Sam Goldwyn is also reported to have signed Robert Riskin on the same plan and is said to be seriously considering hiring all his key men in the same manner.

There is nothing particularly original in this sudden discovery that anyone will work harder and better on any job if he is to receive a share

in the results of his efforts and not be rewarded by a mere salary. Circuits long ago discovered that they could raise their grosses by having the individual managers share in the increased business. However, these plans came to naught when profit-sharing quotas were jumped and "fixed charges" suddenly became enormous. (Very good word, that word "fixed.")

But back to Hollywood and its profit sharing ideas . . . wouldn't it be swell, Mr. Selznick and Mr. Goldwyn, if you could make this a 100% proposition whereby not only your creators but also the men who sell these pictures to the public and feed you your profits get a share of them?

True, selling pictures on a percentage rental is theoretically supposed to put the exhibitor on a partnership basis with the distributor. But the partnership is all one-sided. Percentages have become way out of line with the exhibitors' expenses and income. If a picture does badly at the box office, the producer has practically the entire world from which to regain his investment while the exhibitor has but a single situation.

\* \* \*

Listed in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's current release schedule for August 26th is a picture titled "Marie Antoinette." To many exhibitors this was a distinct surprise for they were led to believe that the picture was to be road shown before being released generally.

However, it was not a surprise that was hard to take for surely no exhibitor is going to squawk about getting a big picture especially while its publicity is hot.

We don't know why Leo has decided not to road show "Marie Antoinette," but if this is the beginning of the end of road shows, the exhibitors should be very happy.

There is absolutely no rhyme nor reason why any picture should be sold to the public at premium prices. This same public supports the run-of-the-mill pictures every day in the year and there can be no justification for putting an added tariff on them when a particularly outstanding attraction comes along.

\* \* \*

Support the "Movies Are Your Best Entertainment" campaign!

There is no need to elaborate upon the plans that have been made to bring patrons back to the movies. The daily trade papers have devoted many columns of space to a discussion of them.

HARRISON'S REPORTS should impress upon every exhibitor, large or small, the necessity of getting behind the campaign in their individual situations.

This great industry of ours has gone through some trying years and there are more to follow until "the lion and the lamb" can lie down together. We are being maligned on every hand, by smart-alecky radio commentators, columnists, reformers, censors, and fanatics; by law suits, scandals, and silly interviews.

All of our dirty linen is laundered by the press at the expense of our respect and patronage. Only a strong institutional campaign coupled with topflight pictures will restore our prestige and regain our former patronage.

"The Movies Are Your Best Entertainment" campaign looks like the ticket. Get behind it!



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Vol. XX

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 1938

No. 35

## ACTION

Al Steffes, President of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest, the man chiefly responsible for the passage of the North Dakota theatre divorce law, has made up his mind not to wait until the U. S. Supreme Court renders its verdict whether that law is constitutional or not; feeling sure that it will be declared constitutional, he has resolved to have introduced in the Minnesota legislature a similar measure, to compel the producer-distributors to divest themselves of their theatre holdings.

To be sure that he will get legislative support, he has sent a questionnaire to the candidates for election in November. Those who will refuse to pledge their support to a theatre divorce bill will fail to receive the support of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest.

Other exhibitor leaders would do well to emulate Mr. Steffes' example; they would be serving the interests of the members of their organizations well if they should.

## THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(By An Exhibitor)

*Variety*, in its issue of August 17th, makes an eloquent plea for the distributors to follow the example of many leading commercial enterprises and sell the dealer, i.e. the exhibitor, on their product.

We quote a few of *Variety's* more pertinent statements:—

"Wherever in the world capitalism is the prevailing method of economic organization the cardinal principle of merchandising is to first reach and first sell the dealer. For the dealer is not alone the distributor's best customer but he is also, which is vitally important, the distributor's ally in the further and final task of selling the ultimate consumer, the public.

"... Wheaties and Huskies, Jello and Royal Gelatine and all the rest are sold by master merchandisers who are constantly preoccupied with what the dealer thinks of the product, to what lengths of cooperation the dealer will go for the distributor because of faith in, and enthusiasm for, the goods being sold.

"... The exhibitor shares with dealers everywhere a human susceptibility to either enthusiasm or defeatism. It is for distributors, and distributors alone, to bring back the old time zinginess of point-of-sale showmanship.

"... Enthusiasm on the part of the exhibitor is not a lessened need, but an increased one, when the distributor books his pictures on sharing terms. ... Deal the dealer in."

This writer is heartily in accord with your statements, *Variety*. Unfortunately, you did not carry your comparison of the differences in distributor-dealer relationships quite far enough.

As long as we are to have General Foods, Standard Brands, Texaco, Gulf, etc., as shining examples, let's investigate their conduct toward their dealers as compared to a motion picture distributor's toward his.

Does Standard Brands tell Mr. Grocer that he must take two cases of XYZ soap powder before they will sell him one case of Royal Gelatine?

Does General Foods tell Mr. Grocer that on twelve Saturdays and Sundays he can only sell Jello?

Does Texaco tell Mr. Gas Station Owner that since they built a new \$2,000,000 refinery and can now turn out a better grade of gasoline, on which his sales volume will be greater and likewise his profits, they will have to raise the bulk price?

Does Gulf tell Mr. Gas Station Owner that if he wants to sell Gulf Gas that he will have to buy all their by-products though he has absolutely no need for them and can't possibly sell them to his customers?

Yes, *Variety*! there is a crying need for more all-around enthusiasm about pictures. Enthusiasm infectious, the kind that can be passed on to the people who buy tickets.

But when you are pleading with distributors to try to emulate their commercial contemporaries in "dealing the dealer in," ask them also to copy their other ways and means of keeping their dealers happy. Perhaps then we won't need the government to show us how to put our houses in order.

\* \* \*

The "Movies Are Your Best Entertainment" campaign is well under way. HARRISON'S REPORTS, as I see it, has already gone on record as endorsing this effort to bring the public back to the theatres.

This writer cannot impress too strongly upon every exhibitor how necessary it is to get the public back in the movie habit. Smart-alecky radio commentators, whose business it is to sell hair oil and cigarettes, would have the people believe that movie patronage is in a deplorable state (caused in part by their knocks) and that MAYBE movies are your best entertainment.

There is no argument as to the fact that business is not as good as it should be but that is all

(Continued on Last Page)



**"Marie Antoinette" with Norma Shearer  
and Tyrone Power**

(MGM, Aug. 26; time, 157 min.)

Excellent! It is a magnificent spectacle, produced with extreme lavishness; the direction and acting are brilliant. But, for all its "bigness," it is the personal drama of the Queen's life that holds the spectator's interest throughout. Played with artistry by Norma Shearer, the Queen is a pathetic figure, one for whom the spectator feels sympathy and in the end deep pity. The closing scenes showing her bewilderment during the Revolution and her misery at being separated from her children are so powerful that one cannot hold back the tears. (Of interest, too, is the picture of court life, with its intrigue and extravagance. The Revolution itself is not played up; the story is concerned only with the personal effect it had on the Queen, her husband and her children. The romance in the Queen's life is handled with good taste, but it is of minor importance. Although consistently interesting, the picture is a little too long for general release:—

When Marie Antoinette is told that a marriage had been arranged for her with the Dauphin, she is overjoyed, for it meant that one day she would be Queen of France. She is heartbroken when, on her marriage night, the Dauphin informs her that he was impotent; he pleads with her not to tell any one. For the next two years she is miserable; taunted by Madame Bovary, the King's mistress, because she did not have children, and slighted by every one at court, she is lonesome. The Duke D'Orleans, who hated Madame Bovary, suggests that Marie change her mode of living. Under his tutelage, she becomes gay, flirtatious, and sophisticated; soon she has a large following. Because of her insulting manner towards Madame Bovary and the fact that she did not have children, Marie is humiliated when told that the King had ordered her marriage annulled. The Dauphin is enraged, for he loved Marie and had just become capable of carrying out his duties as a husband. Marie is comforted by Count Axel DeFersen (Power), with whom she had fallen deeply in love. The King dies that very night, and so Marie and the Dauphin become Queen and King. The Count insists that they do not see each other again. In the course of time, Marie gives birth to a son and a daughter. But the revolution brings an end to everything. Her husband is beheaded, her children taken from her, and finally she, too, is sentenced to be beheaded.

The story was based in part on the book by Stefan Zweig. Claudine West, Donald Ogden Stewart and Ernest Vajda wrote the screen play, W. S. Van Dyke II directed it, and Hunt Stromberg produced it. In the cast are John Barrymore, Robert Morley, Anita Louise, Joseph Schildkraut and others.

Not quite suitable for children. Class B.

**"The Missing Guest" with Paul Kelly  
and Constance Moore**

(Universal, Aug. 12; time, 67½ min.)

A fair program entertainment. It is pretty good, up to a certain point; as long as it sticks to the spooky part of the story, it is all right, for then the spectator's attention is held, in spite of the fact that the plot is far-fetched; but no sooner do two dumb detectives enter the picture than it falls flat, for they make everything seem ridiculous, thereby weakening the melodramatic angle. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

Paul Kelly, a newspaper reporter, is sent by his

editor to get a story for a Sunday edition dealing with a certain house that was supposed to be haunted. The editor orders him to spend the night in the blue room where several persons had been murdered or disappeared. Kelly arrives at the house on the night that the owner was giving a masquerade ball. He pretends to have met with an automobile accident, but the moment it is discovered that he was a reporter, he is ejected; but he manages to get back. While Kelly is there, another man (William Lundigan) disappears from the blue room, and a doctor friend of the family is found murdered there. Kelly finds a secret passageway to the room and finally solves the mystery. Lundigan, upon learning that the doctor had been his father's murderer, had trapped him in the blue room and killed him. All the weird things that had been happening are explained. Kelly not only gets an increase in salary, but wins Constance Moore, daughter of the owner of the house, as his bride.

Erich Philippi wrote the story, and Charles Martin and Paul Perez, the screen play; John Rawlins directed it, and Barney A. Sarecky produced it. In the cast are Edwin Stanley, Selmer Jackson, Billy Wayne, and others.

Because of the murder it is unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"The Gladiator" with Joe E. Brown  
and June Travis**

(Columbia, Aug. 15; time, 72 min.)

This is a good comedy; it should appeal not only to the Joe E. Brown fans but to audiences in general for it has many comical situations, some of which provoke hearty laughter. The closing scenes, in which Brown, under the influence of a powerful stimulant, wrestles a husky contender and, as the match progresses, gradually loses his strength, is extremely comical. Most of the laughs are provoked by the things that Brown does while he has the supernatural strength which the stimulant gives him. The romance is routine:—

When Brown wins \$1,500 in a bank night drawing, he decides to go back to college after an absence of twelve years. The college students take advantage of him because of his awkwardness and shyness; they pretend they want him on the football team and, once they have him on the field, go after him mercilessly. Lucien Littlefield, a scientist with whom Brown boarded, discovers a serum which, when injected, would give a person supernatural strength. While Brown is sleeping, he injects it into his arm. When Brown awakens he is amazed at his strength; he crushes a clock in one hand, breaks through a wall with his fist, and flattens out everything he touches. Littlefield tells him what he had done; Brown, with this unusual strength, naturally becomes a great football star; but he incurs the enmity of Robert Kent, the Captain, because of his devotion to June Travis. In order to earn enough money to adopt orphan Dickie Moore, Brown challenges the champion wrestler. In the first round Brown is marvelous; but gradually the effects of the serum wear off and he is helpless. Purely by accident, he knocks out his opponent, winning the match and the money. He plans to marry Miss Travis and adopt Dickie.

Philip Wylie wrote the story, and Charlie Melson and Arthur Sheekman, the screen play; Edward Sedgwick directed it, and David L. Loew produced it. In the cast are Ethel Wales, Donald Douglas, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Four Daughters" with Priscilla Lane,  
Claude Rains, Jeffrey Lynn and  
John Garfield**

(1st Ntl. [1938-39] Sept. 24; time, 90 min.)

Excellent! In adapting it from the story "Sister Act," several changes were made in characterizations and plot; but these are to the picture's benefit, for as it now stands it is a simple, heart-warming drama with deep human appeal and excellent comedy, both in situation and dialogue. The direction and acting are outstanding. Two newcomers, Jeffrey Lynn and John Garfield, display unusual talent and should make a strong impression; and Priscilla Lane confirms the fact that she is a fine actress. There are situations that bring tears to the eyes and others that provoke hearty laughter; at all times the actions of the characters seem real and natural. It is the type of picture that leaves an audience completely satisfied:—

Into the happy home of Claude Rains, a musician, whose four daughters (Priscilla, Rosemary, Lola Lane and Gale Page) and his spinster sister (May Robson) adore him, comes Jeffrey Lynn, a young, handsome, and carefree composer. He wins over every one by his infectious gaiety. Shortly after his arrival he sends for his music arranger (John Garfield), a frustrated, disillusioned young man, who felt that luck was against him. Priscilla, feeling sorry for him, tries to cheer him up and does this so successfully that he falls madly in love with her, and for the first time takes an interest in life. But again his dreams are shattered when Lynn and Priscilla announce their engagement. On her wedding day, Priscilla learns that her older sister (Gale), whom she adored, was in love with Lynn; not wanting to hurt Gale, Priscilla runs away with Garfield and marries him. A year later, on a visit to her home for a family reunion, Priscilla again sees Lynn and realizes how she loved him and that her sacrifice had been in vain for Gale had decided to marry her small-town suitor; Garfield, feeling that he stood in the way of Priscilla's happiness and realizing he was of no use to any one, purposely crashes the car he was driving and dies from the injuries. Eventually Priscilla and Lynn are reunited.

The plot was adapted from the story by Fannie Hurst. Julius J. Epstein and Lenore Coffee wrote the screen play, Michael Curtiz directed it, and Henry Blanke produced it. In the cast are Dick Foran, Frank McHugh, Vera Lewis and others.

Class A.

**"Safety In Numbers" with Jed Prouty  
and Spring Byington**

(20th Cent.-Fox [1938-39] Sept. 9; time, 58 min.)

"The Jones Family" fans should thoroughly enjoy this. It has plentiful excitement and delightful comedy bits; as a matter of fact, it is good entertainment even for those who are not regular followers of the series. One of the most comical situations is that in which the conversation of two persons is mixed into a broadcast when keys on the control board are accidentally opened. Although the story develops just as the spectator expects it would, one is held in suspense; particularly exciting are the closing scenes, when the family gives chase to crooks.

This time the Joneses become involved with crooks, who lead them and their neighbors to believe that the springs located in certain swamp land in their town contained valuable mineral water, and that they were going to put up a health resort

and give the building contracts to the business men of the town. But the business men, led by Jones, feel that they should be permitted to invest in the company; the crooks "reluctantly" permit them to invest \$100,000. On the day that the last \$10,000 was to be turned over, Lucy Jones and her boy friend accidentally fall into the springs and discover that it was just swamp water. The crooks rush to leave town. But Mrs. Jones, who had been broadcasting on their behalf, thinks of a way of bringing them back; she states, over the radio, that a false rumor had been spread about the mineral water not being good, that the water was good, and that the investment would bring in enormous profits. The crooks, who had heard the broadcast, naturally rush back to what they think is a good thing. But Mr. Jones scares them away again. After a hectic chase, however, they are caught, and the money recovered. All the investors are reimbursed. The family is happy when young Jones, who had planned to elope, decides to help his father instead.

Dorothy Manney and Zena George wrote the story, and Joseph Hoffman, Karen DeWolf and Robert Shapin, the screen play; Malcolm St. Clair directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are Shirley Deane, Russell Gleason, Ken Howell, George Ernest, June Carlson, Henry Kolker, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Rich Man Poor Girl" with Robert Young,  
Lew Ayres and Ruth Hussey**

(MGM, August 12; time, 71½ min.)

A very good program comedy-drama. It is the type of picture that will be appreciated by the masses for it revolves around a typical American family, whose actions are true to life. It has deep human appeal and a charming romance; the comedy is brought about in a natural manner without forcing situations. And the individual performances are excellent:—

When Ruth Hussey becomes engaged to her millionaire employer (Robert Young), her family, consisting of father, mother, brother, and sister, are delighted; but her cousin (Lew Ayres), who spent his time speaking about the injustices suffered by the middle-classes, warns her that, although they were poor, they would accept no favors from her fiancé. Miss Hussey puts off the marriage, for she loved her family and wanted them to become accustomed to the idea of her marriage to a millionaire and what it would mean to them. Young makes many attempts to do things for the family but he is repulsed. He finally brings them around; he does this by pretending that what Ayres had preached appealed to him and he was going to give away his entire fortune. Young's sister (Rita Johnson) threatens to bring an action to declare him incompetent. Naturally Miss Hussey's family is heartbroken to think that they had been the cause of the whole thing. When they come to their senses and admit their mistakes, Young then informs them that he had not given away his fortune; he insists that they accept his favors and forget their pride. Young and Miss Hussey, with the family affairs settled, decide to marry.

Edith Ellis wrote the story, and Joseph A. Fields and Jerome Chodorov, the screen play; Reinhold Schunzel directed it, and Edward Chodorov produced it. In the cast are Lana Turner, Rita Johnson, Don Castle, Guy Kibbee, Sarah Padden, and Gordon Jones.

Suitability, Class A.



the more reason why every exhibitor should become a showman and try to remedy the situation.

Like all good movements certain unscrupulous individuals and companies will try to twist the campaign to serve their own purposes. Since practically all the pictures in the contest are new product, some salesmen will attempt to use this fact as a lever to force the immediate sale of their contracts.

Exhibitors should acquaint HARRISON'S REPORTS with any cases where this is used as a sales argument.

\* \* \*

Not so many months ago MGM brought a long smoldering exhibitor complaint to a head by producing its own radio show. It was the proverbial "last straw." Here was a producing company giving away the very stars it was asking exhibitors to sell for them. Heretofore, individual stars, whose popularity was attained by the collective efforts of thousands of exhibitors, were the offenders.

Several weeks ago, with a much publicized campaign, 20th Century-Fox took to the air to exploit "Alexander's Ragtime Band." It was the biggest thing that ever happened on radio. Undoubtedly a great portion of the terrific grosses "Alexander" is now piling up can be attributed directly to the effect of the air show. Thousands of people, who might have taken in a movie the night of the broadcast, decided to stay home to listen to it.

In a few weeks Paramount will start to radio-exploit its product with a tieup on the Fitch program whereby 1000 passes will be given away each week. These passes will be good for any Paramount picture at any theatre and will be redeemed at full value by its various exchanges.

This writer does not intend to startle the world with the statement that "radio as an entertainment medium is here to stay." We merely wish to point out that radio can be made to work for pictures, as in the case of the Fitch broadcast, and not against it.

Every day 120,000,000 people are asking themselves, "What am I going to do tonight?" Many of them will find their way to theatres. Picture stars have no right to give themselves to the public for nothing and thereby deter a goodly portion of those 120,000,000 million people from purchasing tickets.

Radio needs topnotch and well known entertainment if it is to secure advertising revenue. But that is no reason why screen artists should go into competition with themselves and help build up an important source of opposition.

The new radio season begins soon. Undoubtedly many screen stars will be lured into air appearances by fat checks and the vicious circle will be off again. Producers will do well to try to keep their stars off the air and make radio work for pictures—not against them.

### MR. CARL LAEMMLE SPEAKS!

Mr. Carl Laemmle, the old war-horse of the motion picture industry, has come out of his retirement to help the independent theatre own-

ers in their efforts to abolish block-booking. This he did by a statement, which he sent to Mr. Albert A. Galston, president of the Independent Theatre Owners of Southern California and Arizona.

Part of Mr. Laemmle's statement is as follows:

"Abolition of the block-booking system will be a good thing for the industry. Of course, the picture producer won't like it because it means that he will be obliged to make only good pictures. The exhibitor will not be obliged to buy the bad ones, therefore, the producer who hopes to ring in a few cheaters will not have a market for them and he will be left with the duds on his hands. However, in the course of time, the producer will not be sorry if block-booking is ruled out. He will not be obliged to make trash, to compete with trash, but can concentrate on high grade product, make better pictures and make more money.

"In the last analysis it simmers down to quality. Surely every picture producer would rather make quality pictures than routine pot-boilers. But quality usually costs more money than ordinary product. Therefore, since the exhibitor insists on quality, he should be willing to pay for quality. No producer can give the theatre manager high quality pictures for low quality prices. . . .

"The principal argument against block-booking, from the theatre manager's standpoint, is that under this system he is obliged to give his patrons what the manufacturer wants, and not what the patrons want. The manager is obliged to exhibit the high class of pictures along with the low class, and he has no choice. The block-booking system obliges the exhibitor to take everything, or nothing. On his side of the argument, the picture producer has always claimed that he cannot make his business pay unless the theatres are willing to exhibit everything he makes. . . .

"And thus the controversy has gone on and on for many years. . . .

"Abolition of block-booking will put the picture producer strictly on his merits. He will have to make the best possible product, no matter what its classification, or quit making pictures. Of course, the picture producer will rave and tear his hair over this proposition, but in the long run it will prove to be a blessing in disguise. The producer will make better pictures, the public will come more often to see them, the exhibitor will thereby make more money, and if he is not altogether unwise, he will be more than willing to pay the extra price to the manufacturer for the higher cost of better pictures."

Mr. Laemmle found a fault in the Neely Bill; he objects to the penalty provision of it. But had he had an Allied leader to explain the effect of that provision, he would not, I am sure, think so badly of it. The penalty provision will in no way affect the conscientious producer. On the other hand, a law without a penalty provision cannot accomplish the reform intended.

HARRISON'S REPORTS salutes Mr. Laemmle for taking up the cudgel on behalf of the independent exhibitor.



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## OVERPLAYING THEIR HAND

Heywood Broun, the famous columnist of the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain, had a fine article in the August 27 issue of the New York *World-Telegram* about why many of the highly-paid Hollywood artists are so radically inclined, when all high-salaried persons are, as a rule, conservative. The occasion was the Dies committee's investigation of un-American activities—Fascist, Nazi, and Communistic.

"It all began during the race between Merriam and Upton Sinclair," Mr. Broun said partly: "Upton frightened the producers enormously, and they contributed much in money and propaganda to his rival. And though the magnates won, they paid a price which they had not anticipated. The pressure which they put on players for campaign contributions had much to do with later trade union organization in the screen industry. In other words, the men in power overplayed their hands."

The major companies have always overplayed their hand. They overplayed their hand when they dragged exhibitor-producer negotiations for a better contract immediately after the entry of Mr. Will H. Hays into the motion picture industry, compelling the exhibitors to accept compulsory arbitration in return for a uniform contract. They overplayed their hand when, through the Film Boards of Trade, they controlled, in the majority of the cases, the decisions of the arbitrators. They overplayed their hand when they used arbitration as a collection agency. They overplayed their hand when they used the credit committees as a black-jack. They overplayed their hand when they framed the NRA Code to suit themselves. They overplayed it when they refused to clean up the screen voluntarily, doing so only after the churches had revolted and threatened to boycott the entire industry. They overplayed their hand when they, in making deals with large circuits, tried to put provisions into the contracts affecting the rights of third parties, without the knowledge of such parties. But the most glaring overplay of hand that was done by most of them was when they bought theatres right and left, in small towns as well as in the big cities, by fair or unfair means, either forcing the owners of them to sell their theatres at a sacrifice, or putting them altogether out of business by means of a competitive theatre.

They have, of course, paid through the nose in every instance; but the greatest payment still has to be made; they will be compelled to make it as a result of the suit that the U. S. Government has brought against them, to compel them, not only to discontinue their monopolistic practices, but also to give up their theatres.

That they will be compelled to give up their theatres no unbiased person has any doubt; so much precedent has been established in the courts in the cases of other industries, proving the right of the Government to order separation of the wholesaler from retailing activities, that it is almost a certainty that such will be the verdict of the courts also in this case.

All indications point to the fact that the United States Government is bent upon setting the motion picture house in order. But to do so most easily it has to have the cooperation of every theatre owner who has at one time or other suffered from the unfair tactics of the producer-distributors.

If you are one of those exhibitors who has either been forced by them to go out of business, or is now conducting your theatre at a loss as a result of monopolistic practices, you owe it to yourself to submit your facts to the Department of Justice. The Department of

Justice no doubt wants to know the following facts:

(1) Information tending to show that the major companies have acquired theatres in such a way as to divide the United States into theatre domains.

(2) Facts tending to show that each theatre-owning producer-distributor is given priority and preference in regards to pictures produced and distributed not only by other producer-distributors, theatre-owning or not, but also by itself, depriving independent theatre owners, operating in the same locality, of early-run product.

(3) Information showing that a theatre owner was compelled to sell or lease his theatre to a major company or its affiliate by threatening:

(a) To build a competitive theatre.

(b) To purchase a theatre site in his neighborhood.

(c) To deprive him of product.

(d) To purchase an equity or interest in a competing independent theatre with the object of gaining control of the independent theatre.

(e) To impose arbitrary clearance and zoning, as well as excessive film rentals, or other conditions that would prevent the continued successful operation of the independent theatre.

When an independent theatre owner was or is in competition with a theatre owned or controlled by one of the major companies or by one of such company's subsidiaries, the Department of Justice would naturally want to know if the following practices have been resorted to against that theatre for the benefit of the affiliated theatre:

(a) Giving preference or priority to its own theatre, or to the affiliated theatre of another major company, in the licensing of product, thus preventing the independent theatre from obtaining first or preferred run.

(b) Product overbuying and double-billing so as to keep all product away from the independent theatre owner.

(c) Refusal of a major company to release to the independent theatre owner product which the affiliated competitor has not exhibited or does not intend to exhibit, until after such product has lost its box-office value.

(d) The imposition upon such independent theatre of unreasonable zoning as well as of clearance for the benefit of the affiliated theatre.

(e) The withholding or the delaying of exhibition by an affiliated theatre, thus increasing, in effect, the period of clearance over the subsequent-run independent theatre.

(f) The transferring by an affiliated theatre of a first-run picture to another theatre in the same locality, on the excuse of "continuous run," thus reducing the box-office value of that picture to the independent theatre.

(g) The forbidding of double bills as well as the establishing of minimum admission prices for the benefit of a competing affiliated theatre.

In writing your complaints to the Department of Justice, you might take up also the following questions:

(1) **Block-Booking:** If the producer compelled you to buy his product in a block form so as to (a) fill your play-dates and thus prevent you from buying pictures from another producer-distributor; (b) prevent you from showing in your theatre the type of pictures your patrons liked to see.

(2) **Score Charge:** If the producer made the score charge so unreasonable that he made the operation of your theatre unprofitable.

(Continued on last page)



**"Spawn of the North" with George Raft,  
Henry Fonda, Dorothy Lamour  
and Louise Platt**

(Paramount, Aug. 26; time, 109 min.)

A strong melodrama that should prove particularly thrilling to men; women may find it a little too rough in spots for their taste. The novelty of the setting, the magnificent photography, the terrific excitement in the scenes of the fight between the fishermen and the raiders, and the climax showing the breath-taking crash of the glacier, are the main attractions; blended with this is a drama of friendship, love, and hatred. The necessity of developing the love story occasionally slows up the action; but the action fans will, for the most part, find it exciting fare. The Alaska fishing country is the background:—

Henry Fonda and George Raft are sincere friends who would do anything for each other. Fonda, upon his father's death, becomes owner of a broken-down cannery that he was determined to build up. Along with the other fishermen, he sets his traps for a haul during the salmon season. But Raft had other ideas; he wanted to buy a ship and go in for whaling, and he hoped that Fonda would join him. In order to make money quickly, Raft becomes mixed up with Akim Tamiroff and his gang of pirates who raided and stole hauls from other fishermen's nets. Dorothy Lamour, owner of a waterfront hotel, who was deeply in love with Raft, pleads with him to give up the illegal work, but he insists that he had to have the money quickly. In a terrific fight between Tamiroff's men and the fishermen, Fonda is forced to shoot Raft, who was bombarding the fishermen's boats. Raft recovers; but, realizing that Tamiroff was out to kill his friend, pretends to hate Fonda. He induces Tamiroff to take him out in his boat in order to get to Fonda, who was preparing to fight it out with Tamiroff. On a pretext, he gets Tamiroff to go into the cabin. He then purposely crashes the boat into a glacier, thereby killing himself and Tamiroff. Fonda realizes that Raft had sacrificed his life for him. He is consoled by Louise Platt, his sweetheart, who had been a friend to the two men since their boyhood days. Miss Lamour is grief-stricken.

Barrett Willoughby wrote the story, and Jules Furthman and Talbot Jennings, the screen play; Henry Hathaway directed it, and Albert Lewin produced it. In the cast are John Barrymore, Lynne Overman, Fuzzy Knight, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Garden of the Moon" with Pat O'Brien,  
Margaret Lindsay and John Payne**

(1st Nat. [1938-39], Rel. date not set; 92½ min.)

This musical should go over well with young folk. It has plentiful comedy, excellent music of the swing variety, romance, and fast action. Most of the laughs are provoked by Pat O'Brien, who, as the manager of a famous cafe, tricks every one into doing what he wants; one of the funniest gags, which is used in a few scenes, is that in which he breaks a watch whenever he is in a tight spot, pretending that it was a gift from his mother and thereby winning the sympathy of those opposing him. John Payne, a comparative newcomer, makes a good impression; he has a pleasant voice and acts with ease in the romantic scenes:—

O'Brien, manager of "Garden of the Moon," a well-known Hollywood cafe, is annoyed when the band he had booked to open the new season is un-

able to appear owing to a bus accident. Margaret Lindsay, his publicity agent, induces him to engage Payne and his band; although they were unknown she had once heard them play in a cheap New York restaurant and felt that they would make a hit. Payne is naturally delighted at the opportunity; but once he arrives in Hollywood, he clashes with O'Brien, who gives him two weeks' notice of dismissal. Miss Lindsay, knowing how O'Brien loved to entertain royalty, works out a scheme with Jimmy Fidler, radio commentator, and Payne; they engage a man to pose as the son of an Indian potentate, and to pretend that he was a good friend of Payne's. The scheme works, and O'Brien is delighted to entertain the royal guest. He makes overtures to Payne to stay on at the cafe, but Payne refuses. When he finds out about the trick he is ready to kill Payne; but again he has to control his temper when he learns that Payne and his band had been booked for an important radio hour. By pretending that he was dying, he induces Payne to sign a contract to remain in Hollywood. When Payne realizes he had been tricked, he is furious, but he calms down for he knew he had opportunities in Hollywood; furthermore, he had fallen in love with Miss Lindsay.

H. Bedford Jones and Barton Browne wrote the story, and Jerry Wald and Richard Macauley, the screen play; Busby Berkeley directed it, and Lou Edelman produced it. In the cast are Johnnie Davis, Melville Cooper, Isabel Jeans, Mabel Todd, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Convicted" with Charles Quigley  
and Rita Hayworth**

(Central Films-Columbia, Aug. 18; time, 54 min.)

Poor. The picture does not look as if it were produced in Hollywood, for the players, aside from the two leading ones, as well as the backgrounds, are unfamiliar. The production looks cheap, the story is trite, and the acting does not help matters much. It hasn't one redeeming feature—even the dialogue is stupid, and in some spots rough. And it fails to hold the spectator's attention, for it is quite obvious just how the plot will develop and end:—

Rita Hayworth, a night club entertainer, tries to stop her brother (Edgar Edwards) from running away with a gold digger (Phyllis Clare); but he resents her interference. Edwards arrives at Miss Clare's apartment, only to find her dead; he is arrested for the murder, tried and convicted. Miss Hayworth is certain that her brother did not commit the crime and tries to make Charles Quigley, the police detective, believe her; but he refuses. Realizing that Marc Lawrence, night club owner, was in some way mixed up in the case, she obtains a position as entertainer at his club. Lawrence becomes enamored of her and permits her the freedom of his quarters. On the day that her brother was to be electrocuted, she obtains evidence against Lawrence; but he finds out who she is and attempts to kill her. He then tells her that he had killed the other girl, Quigley, who had been listening at the door, rushes in and arrests Lawrence. Edwards is freed; Miss Hayworth and Quigley plan to marry.

Cornell Woolrich wrote the story, and Edgar Edwards, the screen play; Leon Barsha directed it. In the cast are George McKay, Doreen MacGregor and others.

Suitability, Class R



**"I Am The Law" with Edward G. Robinson,  
Wendy Barrie and John Beal**  
(*Columbia, Sept. 2; time, 83 min.*)

Very good! Like "Racket Busters" and "Smashing the Rackets" this melodrama centers around the efforts of a special prosecutor to wipe out racketeering; it is the best of the three. The production is lavish and the performances are excellent. There are plentiful thrills, once Robinson, as the prosecutor, starts his investigation. Except for occasional bits of comedy, the story is concentrated mostly on the melodramatic angle:—

Robinson, professor of law at a college, reluctantly agrees to go on a year's vacation with his wife (Barbara O'Neill). He is happy when he is appointed special prosecutor to investigate racketeering, for it meant that he would not have to go away. But he finds it difficult to get any place with the investigation since frightened witnesses, who had been threatened, refuse to testify. He finally convinces one man that he should talk; but before this man could get to his office the racketeers kill him. Robinson is compelled to resign. Determined to continue with the investigation on his own, he enlists the aid of John Beal and twenty-four other lawyers, who had been his students, and proceeds with the investigation. To his sorrow he learns that the racketeer leader was none other than Beal's father (Otto Kruger); Beal is at first unaware of this but later finds out and is determined to stick with Robinson. Working along with Kruger is Wendy Barrie, his mistress, who does not even stop at murder to help Kruger. Robinson collects all his data, including motion pictures involving Miss Barrie in a murder; when he shows the film to Kruger, the latter realizes that he could not fight back. Not wishing to hurt his son, Kruger walks into a trap he had set for Robinson and is killed. With Kruger gone, Robinson is able to clean up racketeering. He is happy when his work is finished and he is able to go back to teaching.

Fred Allhoff wrote the story, and Jo Swerling, the screen play; Alexander Hall directed it, and Everett Riskin produced it. In the cast are Arthur Loft, Marc Lawrence, Robert Middlemass, and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.

**"Come On Leathernecks"**  
**with Richard Cromwell and Marsha Hunt**  
(*Republic, Aug. 8; time, 65 min.*)

A fair action melodrama with comedy. Although the story is routine, it holds one's attention fairly well owing to the good performances. The action drags a little in the beginning; but it picks up in the second half, and ends with an exciting fight between Marines and smugglers. Edward Brophy, as the hero's excitable manager, provokes laughter in each scene in which he appears. The romance is pleasant, but it is not stressed too much:—

When Bruce MacFarlane, U. S. Marine lieutenant, learns that Richard Cromwell, who had just graduated from Annapolis, intended to become a professional football player instead of an officer in the Navy, he is shocked, for he knew that Cromwell's father (Robert Warwick), U. S. Colonel in the Marine Corps, would be heartbroken. MacFarlane tricks Cromwell into reporting for duty on the Coast; Cromwell promises to get even with him. In the meantime, Brophy, who had signed Cromwell up to play football, follows him wher-

ever he goes. MacFarlane tricks Cromwell aboard a ship bound for the Philippine Islands and knocks him unconscious. Cromwell awakens to find that the ship was already on its way; his hatred for MacFarlane is intensified. Cromwell meets and falls in love with Marsha Hunt, one of the passengers, who owned a plantation in the Islands; traveling with her is Leon Ames, who had leased the plantation from her. She was going to see her brother, who worked for Ames. Once Cromwell lands, he is compelled to do active duty. Investigation by the Marines of gun runners leads them to Miss Hunt's plantation; it is discovered that Ames was the guilty person, but that Miss Hunt knew nothing of it. Not until Cromwell fights with the Marines and helps capture the gang of gun runners does he realize how exciting and worthwhile Navy life could be. He decides to give up football and settle down as an officer, with Miss Hunt as his wife.

Sidney Salkow wrote the story, and he, Dorrell and Stuart McGowan, the screen play; James Cruze directed it, and Herman Schlom produced it. In the cast are Howard Hickman, James Bush, and Walter Miller.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Fugitives For a Night"**  
**with Frank Albertson and Eleanor Lynn**  
(*RKO, [1938-39] Sept. 23; time, 62½ min.*)

A fair program entertainment. It is a murder mystery melodrama, but its main attraction, as far as the masses are concerned, is the Hollywood studio background, which gives an inside, but not a very pleasant, view of how some persons connected with motion picture studios act. With the exception of the heroine, most of the characters are objectionable; even the hero is presented as a weakling, who permits every one to treat him shabbily. The production values are worthy of a better story:—

Frank Albertson, whose ambitions to become an actor lead him into accepting a position as "stooge" to Allan Lane, a star, until his talents would be recognized, is taunted by Eleanor Lynn, a publicity writer, who felt that his work was degrading. She tries to convince him that he did not belong at the studio and that he would be better off as the owner of a hamburger stand. But Albertson, who was infatuated with Adrienne Ames, an actress at the studio who just used him for menial jobs, refuses to give up. When Lane, who was on a strike with his producer (Russell Hicks), has no further use for Albertson, Bradley Page, a fading star, engages him as his "stooge." During a party given by Hicks at a gambling casino, the police raid the place; in the excitement, Hicks is murdered. When evidence points to Albertson as the murderer, Miss Lynn rushes him out of the place. Eventually, feeling he could prove that Lane was the murderer, Albertson gives himself up to the police; but his information against Lane is worthless. Page finally confesses that he was the murderer; he had blamed Hicks for his waning popularity. Disillusioned about actors, Albertson decides to buy a hamburger stand and to marry Miss Lynn.

Richard Wormser wrote the story, and Dalton Trumbo, the screen play; Leslie Goodwins directed it, and Lou Lusty produced it. In the cast are Jonathan Hale, Paul Guilfoyle, and others.

Suitability, Class B.



(3) **Designation of Play-Dates:** If the major producer-distributor arbitrarily imposed upon you designation of play-dates, interfering seriously with the establishing of the policy you desired to follow in the operation of your theatre.

(4) **Contract Provisions:** If the major producer compelled you to buy his short subjects before he would sell you his features.

You might inform the Department of Justice also if any exchange men, branch managers or salesmen, are interested in a theatre in your locality, using their influence to deprive you of the product that you would be entitled to if an independent theatre owner were operating such a theatre.

In submitting your complaint, be specific: give your name and address, and the name and address of your theatre; the names of the companies and the location of the theatre or theatres they operate; and the name of the exchangeman, as well as the name of the company he works for, with the address of each. Let the Department of Justice be swamped with the facts it would naturally need, for the prosecution of the case.

Heretofore you dared not come out in the open for fear of reprisals. But this time you need not fear, for the complaint has been brought, not by exhibitors, but by the United States Government. Under such circumstances, no company will dare retaliate. Remember that the United States Government has brought this case against the major companies, at a great expense, to protect you, so that you might be enabled to conduct your business as a free citizen of a free country, unmolested by the powerful. You should, therefore, give to the Department of Justice your cooperation to the fullest extent.

### SHOULDN'T A COBBLER STICK TO HIS LAST?

According to an announcement made by Mr. Barney Balaban, its president, Paramount has now entered the television field.

Commenting in its August 13 issue on the Paramount step, *Motion Picture Herald* says in one paragraph:

"Paramount's entrance into the television field is being made with a view to the use of motion picture film in television broadcasts, it was generally understood."

By entering the television field, Paramount will be compelled to divide its attention between its picture interests and television.

In the opinion of Harrison's Reports, Paramount would have served its own interests and those of the exhibitors much better had it confined itself to producing better pictures. There is so much room for improvement in the quality of its product that, if it were to do so, it would profit to a far greater extent.

What can television offer by way of entertainment that motion pictures cannot offer? Transmission of feature pictures by television is not as satisfactory, as recent experiments have proved, as is reproduction of the same pictures on a screen from the film. The only novelty they would offer would be the transmission of acts, directly from the stage where they are acted; also current events.

But to reproduce on the screen current events, it will be necessary to interrupt the projection of the motion picture. And that would be a disadvantage. Under such circumstances most people might prefer to have their current events in the theatre by means of news-reels.

The only novelty television would offer to motion picture theatres would be, as said, the transmission of acts directly from the stage. But that would require a large picture. And the reproduction of a large picture is, at present, too expensive a matter, as stated in a recent issue of Harrison's Reports. Just now television is still in the experimental stage: the picture it reproduces is large enough to be suitable only for the home.

It is assumed that Paramount has rushed into the television field lest other film companies take it up first, as it happened with talking pictures. But talking pictures were an entirely different matter; something that they did not possess was added to the motion pic-

tures—sound, whereas television offers for the theatre nothing that motion pictures cannot offer. Besides, who in the Paramount organization knows anything about television? Will it not, then, prove costly for it to engage in something none of its executives knows anything about? Didn't its costly broadcasting activities with the Columbia Broadcasting system prove a lesson to it?

If Paramount has a surplus that it can waste, wouldn't it be better if it spent it reducing the prices it charges the exhibitors for film?

Whatever novelty television may offer to picture theatres, it is not of enough importance to have induced a picture producing company such as Paramount to divide its efforts. Paramount should have left the handling of television to organizations that are fitted for it, that can devote all their energies towards improving it. As it is, Paramount will not be able to contribute anything that regular television companies cannot contribute to it much better, and will take away from picture producing enough attention to cause, in the opinion of this publication, a deterioration of its product.

### REFRESHING

Commenting recently on the fact that, out of \$465,000 a year she earns, she receives in the end only a small part of it, a great deal of it going to the government, State as well as Federal, Miss Carol Lombard stated the following:

"I had to pay my agent from that. I also had to give my business manager a good salary. I had to spend nearly \$10,000 on fan mail, parties, publicity and other incidental expenses, and when I got through I had barely \$20,000 left.

"But I have no kicks at all. Fact is, I'm pretty happy about the whole thing. Twenty thousand a year is plenty for me, and as for giving the Government most of my income, I think that's fine.

"I enjoy this country. I like the parks and the highways and the good schools and everything that this Government does. After all, every cent anybody pays in taxes is spent to benefit him.

"I don't need \$465,000 a year for myself, so why not give what I don't need to the Government for improvement of the country? There's no better place to spend it."

Miss Lombard's views in this matter are, indeed, refreshing, particularly when one bears in mind the fact that most people like to moan against taxes and to criticize the Government for every dollar they have to pay to it in taxes. They can gamble and lose many dollars, but they don't want to pay to the Government even a single dollar. They want the comforts of what civilization offers, but they don't want to stand their share of the cost. That is why Miss Lombard's views are refreshing.

Aside from the fact that her views are refreshing, they have done much to win the sympathy of the public for her; and since she is part and parcel of the motion picture industry, benefit is bound to reflect to it. Most of those who have read her views on this subject, will, no doubt, admire her for it, and will be inclined kindly toward the motion picture industry.

Already two New York papers, the *World-Telegram* and the *Post*, have commented on this matter favorably to Miss Lombard—the *Post* editorially, in the August 29 issue, and Heywood Broun, in his August 27 column in the *World-Telegram*; and there is no doubt in my mind that many other newspapers either have commented on her views or will comment on them.

Other motion picture artists should pay attention to the beneficial effect Miss Lombard's attitude on a public question has had upon the entire motion picture industry.

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1938

No. 37

## A SPEECH MADE TO THE WRONG PERSONS

At the Trampe dinner, given in Milwaukee last week by members of the motion picture industry, Mr. Charles C. Pettijohn, of the Hays office, made a speech urging those present to agree to a system of self-regulation for the settling of disputes between exhibitors and producer-distributors.

In view of the fact that the majority of those present were exhibitors, and none of the distributors present is in a position to settle the matter of self-regulation, HARRISON'S REPORTS feels that the speech was made to the wrong persons, and in the wrong place; it should have been made at a gathering of the heads of the major companies, in New York or elsewhere—it matters not where, for it is they who have held up the system of conciliation.

A good start was made recently when the majors decided to look into the matter of conciliation seriously, going so far as to appoint representatives among themselves to lay down a program, which they were to offer to the independent exhibitors for consideration by the leaders of their organization; but as soon as the Government's suit was filed, they discontinued the meetings until the lawyers of their companies decided whether or not it was legal for them to agree to a self-regulation system with the independent exhibitors. A promise was made to let the exhibitors know after Labor Day whether the conciliation program could be carried out or not.

In view of the fact that the system of conciliation was to be voluntary and not compulsory, as was the case with the arbitration system, which was outlawed by the courts in 1929, there was no necessity to consult lawyers in the matter; lawyers, in this paper's opinion, have frequently brought trouble and kept exhibitors and distributors divided. No legal opinion is required to determine whether two people can or cannot get together to lay their troubles before a conciliator, be such a conciliator an individual or a committee, so that this conciliator might decide where an injustice lay, as long as the parties to the dispute are not compelled to accept the conciliator's decision, and as long as no penalties are attached to either of the disputants if he should reject the decision.

If some of the industry's lawyers were inclined to advise their clients rightly, they should have advised them not to pass the resolution that stipulated that any theatre-owning member of their association that played films without the Code Administrator's seal was to pay a fine of \$25,000; for if any act of the producers' has been illegal certainly this one has; in the opinion of this paper, it reeks with illegality.

There have been cases, and the Department of Justice no doubt knows of them, where affiliated theatres refused to play a film, simply because it did not have the Code Administrator's seal. Admissions to that effect have been made. The lawyers will have a tough time justifying the attitude of their clients in this matter.

As a matter of fact, the seal itself is, in the opinion of HARRISON'S REPORTS, the best proof of the existence of a monopoly.

As far as the independent theatre owners are concerned, it does not matter really whether the producers

will offer to them a plan of conciliation, or of self-regulation, as it is some times called, for the United States Government has now undertaken to bring about the abolition of the abuses. The best the exhibitors will receive from the producers under the system of self-regulation is a morsel; on the other hand, the least they will receive through the Government's efforts will be far more than the producers could offer voluntarily. One point alone would be more than the producers' greatest voluntary offer—separation of exhibition from production-distribution, which the Government's suit seeks to effect. So in suspending negotiations, the producers are doing the exhibitors a favor rather than a disservice.

## THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)

Several years ago the distributors evolved a plan for increasing grosses by contributing to the advertising budgets of theatres in key cities. Often times the distributors bore the entire cost of the opening day ads, but in the majority of cases they shared 50-50 on expenditures over the theatres' normal advertising budget.

Concerning the continuance of such cooperative advertising *Motion Picture Herald* carried the following news story:—

"Dissatisfaction among distributors over the support given by exhibitors to cooperative advertising campaigns, for which both share costs, reached an action point this week when Paramount dropped its cooperative policy in favor of magazine advertising and Warner Bros. indicated it will adopt a similar position.

"... At Columbia, Mr. Cohn pointed out that: 'Exhibitors must realize they are in show business and regardless of every other consideration look upon advertising as the life blood of their business.

"'We don't mind giving money for cooperative advertising if the exhibitor will use it to increase his own budget for advertising. But we are fed up with giving exhibitors money to sell a picture and then seeing them not only not use it for that but actually cut their own house budget.'"

At Warner Bros., Mort Blumenstock, eastern director of advertising and publicity, said, "We feel that we have been imposed upon by some exhibitors."

That some exhibitors "chiseled" on the distributors' generosity, there is no question in the mind of the writer. But isn't it a case of the shoe pinching when it's on the other foot?

Still vivid in the minds of exhibitors are several lawsuits and buying strikes against distributors who tried to chisel exhibitors by taking pictures off one year's contract and putting them on the following year's at higher rentals. Then, too, there was the neat bit of chiseling performed when rental increases were extracted because of mounting production costs which never mounted. And so on into the night.

That the Department of Justice felt that exhibitors were being taken advantage of is shown in the anti-trust suit recently filed.

Every showman knows that the backbone of any local advertising campaign is the daily newspaper.

(Continued on last page)



### **"Block-Heads" with Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy**

(MGM, August 19; time, 56 min.)

A good slapstick comedy. It is filled with gags, both old and new, some of which are extremely comical. From the first scene, which shows Laurel guarding a trench for twenty years without realizing that the war was over, to the last one, the picture offers situations that keep the audience laughing throughout. As a matter of fact, some of the scenes are so comical that one does not have to be a Laurel-Hardy fan to enjoy them.

In the development of the plot, Hardy, who thought his pal Laurel had been killed in the war, is happy, twenty years later, to find him alive. Thinking that Laurel had lost a leg, he offers him the hospitality of his home; even when he finds out that he had been mistaken he still insists that he live with him and his wife (Minna Gombell). After many misadventures, during which Laurel ruins Hardy's car and gets him into a few fights, they finally arrive at Hardy's apartment. But Miss Gombell objects to Laurel's presence and leaves. The two men, in an effort to cook dinner, blow up the stove, wrecking the apartment. Patricia Ellis, the next-door neighbor, tries to help them out; but the untimely return of Miss Gombell and Miss Ellis' jealous husband (Billy Gilbert), makes it necessary for Hardy to hide Miss Ellis. Eventually Gilbert finds out that Miss Ellis was hiding in a trunk in Hardy's apartment and is furious. He goes for his gun and chases the two men through the streets, determined to kill them.

Charles Rogers, Felix Adler, James Parrott, Harry Langdon and Arnold Belgard wrote the original screen play, John G. Blystone directed it, and Hal Roach, Jr., produced it. In the cast are James Finlayson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Valley of the Giants" with Wayne Morris, Claire Trevor and Charles Bickford**

(Warner Bros. [1938-39], Sept. 17; time, 83 min.)

Very good. It is a virile out-door melodrama, with plentiful action and thrills. Aided by the excellent technicolor photography and the impressive background of the California Redwood Forest country, it is the type of entertainment that has appeal for almost all types of audiences. The several fights between the homesteaders and the villain's men are so realistic that one is held in tense suspense. But the most thrilling scene is that in which the heroine and a friend, locked in a runaway log train which was about to pass over a bridge that had been tampered with by the villain's men, are saved by the hero; one is held breathless during this scene. Several changes have been made in the plot and in characterizations, thereby lessening its human appeal; but these changes are not serious enough to affect the picture's entertainment value:—

Charles Bickford, a millionaire lumber pirate, learns that, through a legal technicality, he was in a position to steal thousands of acres of redwood timber from the homesteaders. He sends Claire Trevor and her partner (Jack LaRue), owners of a gambling palace, to San Hedrin, to set up a gambling palace there and to help him in his plans. The one person who stood in Bickford's way was Wayne Morris, an independent millman, who controlled the most important territory. Miss Trevor becomes acquainted with him and learns that the bank was holding his note for \$50,000, which would soon fall due. She imparts this news to Bickford who, after some trickery, forces the bank to sell the note to him. Morris, realizing that, unless he could cut enough timber, Bickford would steal his land, enlists the aid of all his friends to help him out. When his henchmen report that progress was being made by Morris, Bickford orders them to do anything to stop it. Morris is forced to dynamite to stop the gangsters from carrying out their plans. In a terrific fight with Bickford, he throws him down a cliff in the path of the blasting; but he rushes down and drags him to safety. Bickford, appreciating what Morris had done and realizing that he was licked, leaves the state, thereby bringing peace and happiness to the homesteaders who get back their lands. Morris and Miss Trevor, who had been regenerated, are married.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Peter B. Kyne; Seton I. Miller and Michael Fessier wrote the screen play, William Keighley directed it and Lou Edelman produced it. In the cast are Frank McHugh, Alan Hale, Donald Crisp and John Litel.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Breaking the Ice" with Bobby Breen, Charles Ruggles and Dolores Costello**

(RKO, August 26; time, 82 min.)

A fairly good comedy-drama, with human appeal; it should go over well where Bobby Breen is liked. The thin story is bolstered up by Bobby's singing, Charles Ruggles' antics, and the ice skating routine by five-year-old Irene Dare, who makes her initial appearance in this picture. As for general adult appeal, the story lacks action and force:—

Dolores Costello, a widow, and her son (Bobby) live with relatives (Dorothy Peterson and Robert Barrat) in a Mennonite village. Bobby is at times unhappy because of the strict rules imposed upon him by Barrat, who forbade him to sing and act in a spirited manner. Determined to help his mother to return to Kansas, where she had a farm and where the man she was in love with lived, Bobby runs away with Ruggles, a happy-go-lucky antique dealer, who lived in Philadelphia. Bobby earns money by singing at a skating rink and in time returns home with his savings, only to find that he had been accused of stealing twenty dollars from his uncle. Bobby realizes that the money must have dropped into a newspaper he had saved and which he had later used for stuffing in a rocking chair owned by Ruggles, but which they had sold. After a hectic search, Bobby, helped by Ruggles, recovers the money and proves his innocence. He and his mother are happy to leave for Kansas.

Fritz Falkenstein and N. Brewster Morse wrote the story, and Mary McCall, Jr., Manuel Seff and Bernard Schubert, the screen play; Edward F. Cline directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. In the cast are Billy Gilbert, Charlie Murray, Jonathan Hale, Spencer Charters, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Tenth Avenue Kid" with Bruce Cabot, Beverly Roberts and Tommy Ryan**

(Republic, August 22; time, 65 min.)

A good program melodrama, with human appeal. Although the story is not particularly novel, it holds one's attention throughout; in addition, the production is good and the acting capable. The picture belongs, however, to twelve-year-old Tommy Ryan; he is extremely convincing in the part of a tough youngster, who becomes regenerated; he acts with ease, arousing laughs or tears as the occasion requires. The closing scenes hold one in suspense and provide some excitement. The romance is pleasant but unimportant:—

Under instructions from Ben Welden, gang leader, three crooks, led by John Wayne, hold up an armored truck; they use Wayne's young son (Tommy) to carry out their plans. Bruce Cabot, ace detective in charge of the investigation, is tipped off by a stool-pigeon and goes to Wayne's apartment; in a gun fight he kills Wayne. He takes Tommy to the police station and tries to make him talk; but Tommy, who was tough and knew all the answers, refuses to be bullied. He is sent to a reform school. Cabot, hoping to win Tommy over with kindness, obtains his release and takes him to his home. Tommy softens under the influence of Horace MacMahon, an ex-pugilist, who worked for Cabot. Tommy, thinking that Cabot was just using him, decides to go to Welden with the baggage receipt for the suitcase that contained the money. He repents and gets a message to Cabot, who raids the hideout. Welden is arrested, and Tommy is happily reunited with Cabot, who had grown to love him. Tommy is assured of a good home for Cabot had decided to marry Beverly Roberts, a newspaper reporter, who was devoted to Tommy.

Gordon Kahn and Adele Buffington wrote the story, and Gordon Kahn, the screen play; Bernard Vorhaus directed it, and Harry Grey produced it. In the cast are Jay Novello, Charles Wilson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### **"My Lucky Star" with Sonja Henie and Richard Greene**

(20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Sept. 2; time, 84 min.)

Although this is just fair in entertainment values, owing to a weak story, it has very good box-office possibilities because of the popularity of Miss Henie and of the supporting players. In addition, it has particular appeal for women for Miss Henie wears attractive clothes throughout. But the thing that gives this picture real value is the skating pageant in the closing scenes called "Alice in Wonderland," which is photographed in tint and is lavishly produced. During this pageant, Miss Henie does the most intricate skating routines that she has yet attempted. Joan Davis and Buddy Ebsen help things along with their comedy and dancing. The romance is pleasant:—

Cesar Romero, the young extravagant son of George Barbier, owner of a large Fifth Avenue department store, marries gold-digging Louise Hovick. His father is furious and orders him to leave town. Romero, late one night, discovers Miss Henie skating in the store's sport department; by pretending that he was ill he induces her to assist him to his apartment. His wife, in company with a detective, arrives in order to get evidence against Romero; but he manages to spirit Miss Henie away. Knowing that Miss Henie wanted an education, Romero induces his father to send her to college on a business proposition—that is, to supply her with a large wardrobe and thus build up trade for the store. Miss Henie becomes a favorite because of her skating ability and is entered for the annual Ice Carnival. She meets and falls in love with Richard Greene, one of the students. Miss Hovick, noticing Miss Henie's picture on a magazine cover, starts an action naming her as correspondent. Because of the disgrace, Miss Henie is expelled from college; but Greene believes in her. Miss Hovick agrees to retract her statement upon payment to her of a large sum of money. Helped by the college students, Miss Henie puts on a skating pageant in the store as a publicity stunt. This wins Barbier over; he pays Miss Hovick the money she wanted, and she, in turn, clears Miss Henie. Miss Henie is reinstated and is welcomed back by Greene and the other students.

Karl Tunberg and Don Ettlinger wrote the story, and Harry Tugend and Jack Yellem, the screen play; Roy Del Ruth directed it, and Harry Joe Brown produced it. In the cast are Arthur Treacher, Billy Gilbert, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

NOTE: The well-known magazine "Life" receives some excellent advertising in this picture.

### **"Carefree" with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire**

(RKO, September 2; time, 82 min.)

Good entertainment; it has been produced with the customary lavishness of an Astaire-Rogers picture. Despite a somewhat weak story, it manages to be entertaining owing to the dancing by the stars, the catchy tunes, and the good performances; and there are several situations that provoke hearty laughter. Although it is not up to some of the previous Astaire-Rogers pictures, it should do good business because of the fact that they have not been seen together for some time and audiences may be eager to see them again:—

Ralph Bellamy, a wealthy lawyer, is in love with Ginger Rogers, an actress; but she cannot make up her mind whether to marry him or not. Bellamy induces her to have a consultation with his best friend (Fred Astaire), a psychiatrist, in order to find out why she was so uncertain of herself. In a short time Miss Rogers is deeply in love with Astaire, but he treats her just like another patient. He puts her in a trance, ordering her to forget about her inhibitions and to do whatever she wanted to. While he is out of the office, she leaves, and, still under the trance, gets into trouble. Eventually she confesses to Astaire her love for him; he, thinking she was just infatuated with him, again puts her in a trance and impresses upon her the fact that she really hated him and loved Bellamy. After he puts the thought into her head he realizes he loved her, and tries to get her back to a normal state; but Bellamy, knowing that if Astaire succeeded, he would lose his fiancée, pre-

vents him from seeing her. The wedding date is set; Astaire, with the help of a friend, succeeds in getting to Miss Rogers just before the ceremony. He brings her back to her former way of thinking, and she falls into his arms; the wedding proceeds, but with Astaire as the bridegroom.

Dudley Nichols and Hagar Wilde wrote the story, and Ernest Pagano and Allan Scott, the screen play; Mark Sandrich directed it, and Pandro S. Berman produced it. In the cast are Luella Gear, Jack Carson, Franklin Pangborn, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Freshman Year" with Constance Moore and William Lundigan**

(Universal [1938-39], Sept. 2; time, 67 min.)

As the initial offering in the collegiate series Universal has announced for production, "Freshman Year" is an entertaining program college comedy, with music; it should appeal particularly to young folk. It has comedy, of the wise-cracking type, mild romantic interludes, and peppy music of the popular variety; the story itself is unimportant:—

Three freshmen, William Lundigan, Stanley Hughes, and Frank Melton, become good friends and room together. Lundigan and Hughes quarrel over one of the girl students (Constance Moore), but they soon settle their differences. Lundigan hits upon the idea of making money by selling "flunk insurance," that is, for fifty cents, he would guarantee the payment of the ten dollars required should a student "flunk" and have to take the examination again. Lundigan felt safe for he knew that Ernest Truex, an old-fashioned professor, had given the same simple examination for years; but Truex had decided to change things and gives instead so difficult an examination that most of the students fail. Not having enough cash with which to meet the policies, Lundigan, with the help of Hughes and other students, puts on a show, which nets him enough to pay all the money that he owed.

Thomas Ahearn and F. Maury Grossman wrote the story, and Charles Grayson, the screen play; Frank MacDonald directed it, and George R. Bilson produced it. In the cast are Dixie Dunbar, Tommy Wonder, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Meet the Girls" with Lynn Bari and June Lang**

(20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Oct. 7; time, 66 min.)

A moderately entertaining program picture, suitable mostly for the second half of a double-feature bill. The production is pretty good, but the story is extremely far-fetched and has been developed according to formula. Although some of the situations, despite their silliness, are comical, the involved plot becomes tiresome by the time the picture is half way through. The producers have announced a series of adventure-comedies in which Lynn Bari and June Lang are slated to appear, of which this is the first:—

After losing their positions as entertainers in a Hawaiian cafe, and their cash in a dice game, Miss Bari and Miss Lang board a steamer bound for San Francisco, hoping thereby to get free food at some farewell party. But they drink too much and before they realize what had happened the boat sails and they find themselves in the position of stowaways. Their presence on the liner is a source of irritation to the Captain, for they are constantly getting into trouble: they even get mixed up in a jewel robbery involving wealthy Gene Lockhart and his wife (Ruth Donnelly). Miss Donnelly, who thought that they knew something of her escapades with a Hawaiian gigolo (Robert Allen), offers to give them \$5,000 if they would recover the jewel for her. They endanger their lives in an attempt to get the jewel, and are finally successful. Richer by \$5,000, they land in San Francisco filled with hopes.

Marguerite Roberts wrote the story and screenplay; Eugene Forde directed it, and Howard J. Green produced it. In the cast are Constantine Romanoff, Jack Norton, and others.

Suitable for adults more than for children. Class B.



Patrons have not yet been educated to pick up a magazine to find out what is playing in town tonight. A strong magazine campaign will be completely effective only when backed up by a strong local campaign.

Funny how easy it is to shout, "I've been robbed!"

\* \* \*

Sometime ago a prominent producer made the statement that "there is nothing wrong with this business that good pictures can't cure."

We have just gone through a summer of very mediocre pictures and business was in line with the quality of the product.

Two weeks ago "Alexander's Ragtime Band" was released nationally. Whether it's playing at your theatre or at the opposition house, the amazement is just about the same. Not only is "Alexander" doing top business but it is running ahead of the phenomenal grosses of "Snow White."

Just when everyone believes the industry is on its knees along comes "Alexander" to prove that a good picture will do business. And good pictures will continue to do business.

Our hat is off to 20th Century-Fox and the production staff responsible for "Alexander's Ragtime Band." But let us have more like it!

\* \* \*

"ELIMINATION OF GIVEAWAYS IN FOX-WEST COAST HOUSES ORDERED BY SKOURAS!" were the headlines in the trade papers.

What has caused Mr. Charles P. Skouras, operating head of the Fox-West Coast Theatres, to make this startling decision, the writer is at loss to know, but his palms are red from applauding.

Does it mean that Mr. Skouras has suddenly discovered that he is in the amusement business and giving away automobiles, chinaware, merchandise, and cash does not come under the head of selling entertainment? Or does it mean that "thar is gold in them thar fillums" when handled by a showman?

Last year, in the New York territory, the various chains, independent and affiliated, tried to get rid of giveaways, but little, if anything, happened to the movement.

On the west coast, F-WC controls the situation and if they definitely remove the cancer, independents, too, will return to selling pictures and pictures alone.

The writer is of the opinion that the sooner giveaways make an exit the better off we will be. We hope that the F-WC move will be followed by exhibitors in every section.

The next stigma to go is double features in first run houses. Let's hear from Mr. Skouras on that!

## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 1

This is the fifth series of articles giving the box-office performances of 1937-38 season's pictures. The first series was printed beginning with the October 23 issue; the second, beginning with the December 18 issue; the third, beginning with the March 5 issue, and the fourth, beginning with the May 28 issue.

### Columbia

"Main Event," with Robert Paige and Jacqueline Wells, produced by Ralph Cohn and directed by Danny Dare, from a screen play by Lee Loeb: Fair-Poor.

"Law of the Plains," with Charles Starrett and Iris Meredith, directed by Sam Nelson, from a screen play by Maurice Geraghty: Fair-Poor.

"Holiday," with Katherine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Doris Nolan and Lew Ayres, produced by Everett Riskin and directed by George Cukor, from a screen play by Donald Ogden Stewart and Sidney Buchman: Very Good-Good.

"Stagecoach Days," with Jack Luden and Eleanor Stewart, directed by Joseph Levering from a screen play by Nate Gatzert: Fair-Poor.

"Highway Patrol," with Jacqueline Wells and Robert Paige, produced by Wallace MacDonald and directed by C. C. Coleman, Jr., from a screen play by Robert E. Kent and Stuart Anthony: Fair-Poor.

"West of Cheyenne," with Charles Starrett and Iris Meredith, directed by Sam Nelson, from a screen play by Ed Earl Repp: Fair-Poor.

"City Streets," with Leo Carrillo and Edith Fellows, produced by Wallace MacDonald and directed by Albert S. Rogell, from a screen play by Fred Niblo, Jr., and Lou Breslow: Fair.

"Pioneer Trail," with Jack Luden and Joan Barclay, directed by Joseph Levering, from a screen play by Nate Gatzert: Poor.

"Reformatory," with Jack Holt, Bobby Jordan and Frankie Darro, directed by Lewis D. Collins, from a screen play by Gordon Rigby: Good-Fair.

"South of Arizona," with Charles Starrett and Iris Meredith, directed by Sam Nelson, from a screen play by Bennett Cohen: Fair-Poor.

Forty-eight pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 2; Very Good-Good, 1; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 4; Fair, 11; Fair-Poor, 23; Poor, 2.

Thirty-eight pictures were released during the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns; they were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 4; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 13; Poor, 8.

### First National

"Mystery House," with Dick Purcell and Ann Sheridan, produced by Gordon Hollingshead and directed by Noel Smith, from a screen play by Sherman Lowe and Robertson White: Fair-Poor.

"Crime School," with Billy Halop, Humphrey Bogart and Gale Page, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by Lew Seiler, from a screen play by Crane Wilbur and Vincent Sherman: Very Good-Fair.

"When Were You Born," with Anna May Wong, Margaret Lindsay and Lola Lane, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by William McGann, from a screen play by Anthony Coldeway: Fair-Poor.

"My Bill," with Kay Francis and Dickie Moore, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by John Farrow, from a screen play by Vincent Sherman and Robertson White: Good-Fair.

"Penrod's Double Trouble," with the Mauch Twins, Dick Purcell and Gene Lockhart, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by Lew Seiler, from a screen play by Crane Wilbur: Good-Poor.

"The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse," with Edward G. Robinson, Claire Trevor and Humphrey Bogart, produced and directed by Anatole Litvak, from a screen play by John Wexley and John Huston: Very Good-Good.

Twenty-eight pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Fair, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 7.

Twenty-seven pictures were released during the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns; they were rated as follows:

Very Good-Good, 3; Good, 5; Good-Fair, 5; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 2.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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No. 38

### MISREADING THE MOTIVES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

For some time, *The Hollywood Reporter* has been carrying on a campaign of misrepresentation of the motives of the U. S. Government in the matter of the lawsuit that it has brought against the major companies for the purpose (a) of putting an end to their discriminatory practices against the independent theatre owners, (b) of compelling them to give up their monopolistic practices, and (c) of dissociating themselves from the ownership or control of picture theatres as tending to further the virtual monopoly that they have set up. Says W. R. Wilkerson, its publisher, in the August 13 issue:

"It's really too bad the Government had to move in on the picture business with its anti-trust trial. And too bad the industry did not have someone with sufficient brains to sit down with the Government, a long time ago, when the tip was sent around that investigators were spotted all over the country, to explain the real lowdown of everything the Government wanted to know, and supply the RIGHT information.

"If the industry had had a man who knew his ground, a man who could explain any situation the Government wanted to know, there would have been no investigation. Certainly, there might have been a demand here or there to correct something out of line, but there would have been so little of the sort that the change never would have been noticed.

"But, most important, the right man with the right knowledge could have pointed out the FACTS of why the major companies were forced to acquire theatres in motivating spots in which to exhibit their pictures. He could have explained, with reason, why certain protective measures had to be placed on the business of exhibition. He could have pointed out that the growth of this industry into the third largest and greatest in the entire world, depended on and was made so by those protective measures the majors had to install into the exhibition of their product. . . ."

According to Mr. Wilkerson's reasoning, the U. S. Government, in applying the anti-trust laws against the violators of them, is prompted to do so, not by the violations of the law, but by its lack of understanding of the law-violators' motives, and that, when the "purity" of such motives is explained to its investigators, the Government does not proceed with the prosecution of the violators of the law. Mr. Wilkerson believes also that the producers have none amongst them who understands his business; for if they had, he would have sat down with the Government investigators a long time ago ". . . to explain . . . everything the Government wanted to know," by supplying the "right" kind of information.

The Government investigators could, for example, be told by such "right persons" why the major companies went into exhibition, and why certain restrictions had to be placed on the business of exhibition. If such a thing had happened, there would not have been, according to the same Wilkerson, a suit against the major companies.

It is difficult to understand how a man of W. R. Wilkerson's experience could print such nonsense. Yes, one dignifies such writings by calling them "nonsense," for they are worse—they are drivels.

If Mr. Wilkerson should have taken a little time to read court decisions, he would never have written such stuff, for he would have then known what the U. S. Supreme Court, in unanimously upholding the lower courts, which had declared compulsory arbitration illegal, on November 24, 1930, said partly:

"The Sherman Act seeks to protect the public against evils commonly incident to the unreasonable destruction

of competition and no length of discussion or experimentation amongst parties to a combination which produces the inhibited result can give validity to their action. Congress has so legislated 'as to prevent resort to practices which unduly restrain competition or unduly obstruct the free flow of such commerce, and private choice of means must yield to the national authority thus exerted.' . . .

"It may be that arbitration is well adapted to the needs of the motion picture industry; but when under the guise of arbitration parties enter into unusual arrangements which unreasonably suppress normal competition their action becomes illegal.

"In order to establish violation of the Sherman Act it is not necessary to show that the challenged arrangement suppresses all competition between the parties or that the parties themselves are discontented with the arrangement. The interest of the public in the preservation of competition is the primary consideration. *The prohibition of the statute cannot 'be evaded by good motives. The law is its own measure of right and wrong, of what it permits, or forbids, and the judgment of the courts cannot be set up against it in a supposed accommodation of its policy with the good intention of the parties, and it may be, of some good results.'*" . . . (The italics are ours.)

In other words, the good motives of the producers cannot swerve the Department of Justice from doing its duty against all those who violate the anti-trust laws.

Unfortunately, Mr. Wilkerson seems not to have read this and other opinions to familiarize himself with the fact that no matter how good the motives of the producers, they are not excused from imposing upon the weak restrictions which they think are demanded by the nature of the moving picture business. For him to keep on passing information so misleading will but harm those whom he aims to serve.

It would be well if Mr. Wilkerson should stop trying to give a lesson of right conduct to the U. S. Government. In this manner he would avoid making himself so ridiculous.

### WHAT COOPERATION CAN DO!

The Motion Pictures' Greatest Year drive is already proving an unprecedented success.

The success of the drive is owed to but one factor—cooperation. With some minor exceptions, which are confined, not to the drive itself, but to some minor details, there has been complete harmony between exhibitors and producer-distributors. Almost every one in the industry has rolled up his sleeves and has gone to work. And business is coming into the theatres.

Why couldn't this great strength have been utilized all along? It could, but the greed of some of the major producers couldn't let them see the greater benefit that would accrue to them by giving the little fellows, too, a chance to live. Instead of exploiting what they had to the greatest degree, getting the benefit to the fullest extent, they utilized their energies toward employing all kinds of political manipulation to get it all. And now that they have it they are running the risk of losing greatly more than they were asked to give.

Where are they going to be after the Government suit is tried?

They are lulling themselves into the belief that the Government will not succeed in the end—that the U. S. Supreme Court will reverse the decision of the lower courts if they should decide against them.

Down in their hearts they hardly believe that such will be the outcome. But suppose, for the sake of argument, that  
(Continued on last page)



**"You Can't Take It with You" with  
Lionel Barrymore, Jean Arthur  
and James Stewart**

(Columbia [1938-39], Sept. 29; time, 127 min.)

Excellent. Robert Riskin did a fine job in adapting it from the stage play for he wisely placed emphasis on the human rather than on the farcical side of the story; yet he did this without sacrificing any of the comedy angles. The home life of the eccentric family and their equally eccentric friends is depicted in so delightful a manner that, despite their antics, one finds them likeable and sympathetic. It is the type of entertainment that amuses one and sets one to thinking, for, mixed in with the romance and comedy, which at times causes uproarious laughter, it offers some sensible homespun philosophy that is understandable to the masses. No one player can be singled out as giving the best performance, for every one in the cast is excellent:—

Lionel Barrymore, who thirty years previously had decided to stop working, enjoys his leisure. Following his example, his daughter's family, with the exception of daughter Jean Arthur, likewise do just what they please. For instance, his daughter (Spring Byington) wrote plays because some one had left a typewriter in their house by mistake, her husband (Samuel Hinds) and two of his cronies, who lived with the family, manufactured firecrackers in the cellar, and Ann Miller, the other daughter, studied ballet dancing under the supervision of Mischa Auer, a Russian outcast, who practically lived at the house; even Miss Miller's husband, who lived with them, had a hobby, and the colored maid was jolly and natural. Miss Arthur surprises her family by announcing that she had become engaged to James Stewart, son of millionaire Edward Arnold. Stewart, who was charmed by the family and wanted his parents to see them without any preparation, surprises Miss Arthur by bringing them unannounced. Everything starts happening—the firecrackers explode and every one in the house is arrested as a radical. They are eventually released; but, because of the attitude of Stewart's parents, Miss Arthur breaks the engagement. Arnold's contact with the slightly mad family makes him realize that he was missing something. And so he gives up a ruthless business venture that would have ruined many and, instead, goes to visit with Barrymore. His presence at the house brings joy to the family, for it meant happiness to Miss Arthur, who had been pining since her separation from Stewart.

The plot was adapted from the play by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart; Frank Capra directed and produced it. In the cast are Donald Meek, H. B. Warner, Halliwell Hobbes, and others.

Class A.

**"Secrets of an Actress" with Kay Francis,  
George Brent and Ian Hunter**

(First Nat'l, [1938-39], Sept. 10; time, 69½ min.)

Just a fair program picture. The story is trite and lacks fast action. And it is developed in so routine a manner, that one knows just what is going to happen and how it will end; for this reason one loses interest in the outcome. There is not much that the performers can do with the material, for almost throughout they are made to mope:—

Kay Francis, an actress waiting for a chance to play on Broadway, becomes acquainted with Ian Hunter, a wealthy architect; he is so impressed with her beauty and talent that he is determined to finance a play, with her as the star. His partner (George Brent) is very much against the idea, but Hunter refuses to listen to him. Once Brent meets Miss Francis, he changes his mind, and even falls in love with her, as she does with him. But he does not tell her that he was married; he had been living apart from his gold-digging wife (Gloria Dickson) for two years, and wanted to ask her for a divorce before speaking of the matter to Miss Francis. In the meantime, Miss Francis finds out about the marriage and, in despair, turns to Hunter, promising to marry him. But Hunter realizes that she loved Brent and, by a ruse, induces Miss Dickson to give Brent a divorce. The lovers are happily reunited.

Milton Krims, Rowland Leigh, and Julius J. Epstein wrote the original screen play, William Keighley directed it, and David Lewis produced it. In the cast are Isabel Jeans, and others.

Although there is nothing morally unsuitable in the picture, it is hardly the type of entertainment for children. Therefore, Class B.

**"Road to Reno" with Randolph Scott, Hope  
Hampton and Helen Broderick**

(Universal [1938-39], Sept. 30; time, 68 min.)

Just a light program comedy. As for Miss Hampton's return to the screen, this reviewer fears that there is not much hope of her becoming popular. Considering the fact that operatic stars whose names have been before the public constantly have not had much success in pictures, it is doubtful whether Miss Hampton, who has not appeared on the screen or in public in general for many years, will attract the masses. Nor is the story of much help; it is for the most part pretty silly, and at times slightly risqué. The actions of the characters are not such as to awaken the spectator's sympathy:—

Miss Hampton, a famous operatic star, goes to Reno to obtain a divorce from her rancher husband (Randolph Scott), with whom she had never lived because he had wanted her to give up her career; she planned to marry wealthy Alan Marshall. But Scott refuses to consent to the divorce and makes it difficult for Miss Hampton to serve papers on him. On the advice of Scott's aunt (Helen Broderick), Miss Hampton turns the place into a dude ranch, much to Scott's disgust; but he refuses to let even this annoyance change his mind about the divorce. Marshall arrives on the scene to complicate matters, for by this time Miss Hampton had decided that she really loved Scott and did not want a divorce. Mistaking Scott's friendship with Glenda Farrell, a much-divorced young woman, Miss Hampton proceeds with the divorce. She changes her mind again and purposely testifies incorrectly so as not to win the decree; but Scott, who, in the meantime, had served her with papers, wins his divorce, only to become reconciled with Miss Hampton when he realizes that she really loved him.

The plot was adapted from the novel by I. A. R. Wylie; Charles Kenyon and F. Hugh Herbert wrote the new story, and Roy Chanslor and Adele Comandini, the screen play; S. Sylvan Simon directed it, and Edmund Grainger produced it. In the cast are David Oliver, Samuel S. Hinds, and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.

**"Three Loves Has Nancy" with Janet  
Gaynor, Robert Montgomery  
and Franchot Tone**

(MGM [1938-39], Sept. 2; time, 68 min.)

A delightful comedy. The story in itself is not unusual; but it has been developed in so amusing a fashion, that it holds one's attention throughout. In addition, the acting and direction are excellent. Not only are the situations comical, but the dialogue, too, is amusing. And to top it off, it has human appeal, due mostly to the charm and simplicity of the heroine. The romantic entanglement involving the heroine and two friends is the cause for most of the comedy:—

Janet Gaynor, a young naive Southern girl, arrives in New York to look for her fiancé, who had failed to show up at their wedding. Failing to find him at the place where he was last employed, she goes to the apartment of Robert Montgomery, a sophisticated eccentric author whom she had met on the train. He considers her a pest and wants her to leave immediately; but suddenly it dawns on him that he could use her to get rid of scheming Claire Dodd, who wanted to marry him. Franchot Tone, Montgomery's publisher and next-door neighbor, is attracted to Miss Gaynor, and after tasting the breakfast she had made, he insists that she become his cook; but when he informs Montgomery that he intended to marry her, Montgomery sends for Tone's parents; Tone, in the meantime, sends for Miss Gaynor's folk. Eventually, after a heated argument between the two families, Miss Gaynor saddens Tone by telling him that she did not love him. Montgomery then realizes that he loved Miss Gaynor, as she did him, and they are united.

Lee Loeb and Mort Braus wrote the story, and Bella and Samuel Spewack, George Oppenheimer, and David Hertz, the screen play; Richard Thorpe directed it, and Norman Krasna produced it. In the cast are Guy Kibbee, Reginald Owen, Cora Witherspoon, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### "Boys Town" with Spencer Tracy and Mickey Rooney

(MGM [1938-39], September 9; time, 93 min.)

A very good drama, with strong emotional appeal. The picture is dedicated to Father Flanagan, who has done excellent work on behalf of homeless boys in Nebraska, where he actually established such a place as Boys Town. It is an inspiring story that is unfolded here, for it shows the determination and courage of one man, in the face of hardships, to help homeless boys. Spencer Tracy, in the part of Father Flanagan, has a great deal to do with the picture's excellence; he plays with restraint and dignity. Mickey Rooney is, as usual, outstanding; starting out as a tough boy, his actions in the beginning are the cause for hearty laughter. His regeneration in the end, although brought about by a sentimental episode, touches one deeply. There are several situations that bring tears to the eyes. There are no women in the cast.

In the development of the plot, Father Flanagan, who had built Boys Town after a terrific financial struggle, during which he was helped mostly by Dave Morris (Henry Hull), an old friend, goes to visit a young convict. The convict pleads with him to take care of his young brother Whitey (Rooney) and Father Flanagan promises. At first Whitey, who was tough, refuses to go; but Father Flanagan forces him to. Whitey turns out to be the most difficult case Father Flanagan had ever handled. After a fight in which he is beaten, Whitey decides to leave Boys Town. One of the small boys, who adored him, runs after him and is knocked down by an automobile. Heartbroken and ashamed of himself, Whitey wanders into town. Hearing shots, he rushes into an alley, only to find his brother, who had escaped from prison, in the midst of a bank holdup. Whitey becomes implicated in the crime, but refuses to talk. This brings bad publicity to Boys Town, just at a time when they needed the public's confidence and contributions. Everything is straightened out when the robbers are caught and confess. Mickey is cleared and restored to the good graces of the members of Boys Town. He changes to a well-mannered young man and is overjoyed when he is elected Mayor of Boys Town.

Dore Schary and Eleanore Griffin wrote the story, and John Meehan and Dore Schary, the screen play; Norman Taurog directed it, and John W. Considine, Jr., produced it. In the cast are Leslie Fenton, Gene Reynolds, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Mysterious Mr. Moto" with Peter Lorre, Mary Maguire and Henry Wilcoxon

(20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Oct. 21; time, 62½ min.)

An exciting mystery melodrama, with a fairly lavish production; it is the best one so far produced in the Moto series. Even though it is simple for one to detect the identity of the murderous gangster leader, it holds one in suspense throughout owing to the constant danger to the hero and to the detective. The closing scenes, where the detective outwits the villain, causing his death instead of the hero's, are particularly thrilling. The romantic interest is mildly pleasant. London is used as the background:—

Lorre, a famous detective, arrives in London in order to track down the leader of an international league of assassins. He becomes valet to Leon Ames, whom he suspected of being one of the gang; his innocent manner fools Ames, but Harold Huber, another member of the gang, becomes suspicious of him. Lorre finds out that the next victim of the gang would be millionaire Henry Wilcoxon, who refused to turn over a new steel formula to the gang. Wilcoxon at first declines Lorre's offer to help him; but urged on by his secretary (Mary Maguire), who loved him, and his best friend (Erik Rhodes), he agrees to be cautious. Lorre finds out where and how the gang intended to commit the murder. By means of a disguise, he enters the place and by a clever trick places the gang leader, who, it develops, was none other than Rhodes, in the spot intended for Wilcoxon. Rhodes is killed and the gang captured. Wilcoxon is thankful to Lorre.

Phillip MacDonald and Norman Foster wrote the original screen play; Norman Foster directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Forrester Harvey, Fredrik Vogeding, and others.

Not for children. Suitability, Class B.

### "Under the Big Top" with Anne Nagel, Marjorie Main and Jack LaRue

(Monogram [1938-39], Aug. 31; time, 63 min.)

A fair program drama, with a circus background; it should go over in small towns. Stock shots of actual scenes at tent circuses have been well blended in with the action to give it an authentic flavor. The trapeze act in the closing scenes offers some excitement in that the life of the heroine, one of the performers, is endangered owing to the unsteadiness of her partner. The romance is routine:—

Marjorie Main, owner of a bankrupt circus, receives word that her orphan niece was being sent to her; she is annoyed to have additional trouble. While playing, the child sets fire to the equipment; but this is good luck for Miss Main, for, with the insurance money, she is able to buy new equipment and start over again. As the years roll by, the circus becomes successful; but the real joy to Miss Main is the fact that her grown niece (Anne Nagel) had developed into a marvelous trapeze artist. Miss Nagel worked with two brothers (Jack LaRue and Grant Richards). She and Richards fall in love; this makes LaRue unhappy for he, too, loved her. When Miss Main finds out about the romance she discharges the brothers; Miss Nagel leaves with them. Just as the team was ready to sail for London, they find out that Miss Main was ill and her circus in a bad way because of the lack of an outstanding act. The three go back. LaRue, who had been drinking, is afraid to go on; but Miss Nagel pleads with him to do so. During the act he realizes that he was in a bad condition, and so, in order to protect Miss Nagel, purposely falls to the ground, thereby injuring himself. Miss Main, sorry for her harshness, gives her consent to the marriage.

Marion Orth wrote the original story and screen play; Karl Brown directed it, and William T. Lackey produced it. In the cast are George Cleveland, Herbert Rawlinson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "The Higgins Family" with James, Lucile, and Russel Gleason

(Republic, August 29; time, 64½ min.)

A good wholesome comedy, revolving around an average American family. The action is fast and the situations, for the most part, are comical enough to provoke hearty laughter. It has plentiful human interest, too, for the members of the family are likeable and, although at times their actions are silly, one cannot help feeling sympathy for them throughout.

The family, consisting of father, mother, sister, brother and grandfather, all have their eccentricities, but they love each other. The father (James Gleason) is happy when his employer, who had to leave on a vacation, puts him in charge of the advertising concern, cautioning him to take good care of their special client (Paul Harvey). Gleason invites Harvey to his home for dinner; but the dinner is a failure for everything goes wrong. In addition, the family, not knowing of Harvey's connection with a certain food company, speak disparagingly of his products. Gleason convinces Harvey that he should have a radio program; Harvey, after hearing Gleason's wife on the radio, during an interview by a roving street reporter, insists that she be on the program; but before Gleason can talk to her, an opposing food company signs her up. In order to try to help her husband, she praises Harvey's foods instead of the sponsor's; this brings about a law-suit and Gleason loses his position. He goes into the advertising business for himself, but again his wife spoils everything. Gleason leaves home; his wife brings a divorce action. But they forget about the divorce when they hear that their daughter had run away; but it turns out she had run away to marry her fiancé. The family is happy once again.

Richard English wrote the story, and Paul G. Smith and Jack Townley, the screen play; Gus Meins directed it, and Sol C. Siegel produced it. In the cast are Lynn Roberts, Harry Davenport, William Blakewell, and George Meeker.

Suitability, Class A.



the last court does decide in their favor, have they overlooked the fact that the Government will appeal to Congress for such laws as will destroy the monopoly they now enjoy and as will correct the other industry abuses, which the Government seeks to correct by means of this suit?

There is yet time for them to see that cooperation will gain them more than obstinacy. They should begin immediately to dispose of the theatres in the small towns. They have no business there.

Let them remember that, what the Federal Government will not be able to do, the state governments will do—by means of taxation and legislation. And let them not forget litigation: they already have their hands full with court cases.

### JAY EMANUEL ON THE ABANDONMENT OF THE CONCILIATION PROGRAM

In connection with the postponement of the conciliation efforts, Mr. Jay Emanuel wrote the following editorial in the September issue of *The Exhibitor*, under the heading, "No Sense":

"There are a lot of things in this business which don't make sense but the latest addition to this list takes the cake.

"We refer to the indication by the distributors' committee that the industry conciliation plan being formulated by the distributor representatives for exhibitors' examination has been postponed until after Labor Day and perhaps later.

"One reason advanced is that there are certain legal angles, because of the government suit against the distributors, which must be considered.

"The reason for the postponement may be logical from the distributors' standpoint but coming when it does it is at odds with the general spirit of the business.

"On one hand we have a commendable 'go forward' note. We have in mind the industry drive for renewed confidence and business. Independents are asked to join with distributors and producers in making the business bigger and better. That is as should be.

"But on the other hand we have the 'go slow' signal from the distributors who say to the exhibitors: 'That conciliation matter will have to wait a while.'

"Wouldn't it be much better for all concerned if both movements took place at the same time? It would seem so."

### THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)

At last the poor maligned exhibitor has come into his own! He has been acknowledged publicly, via paid advertisements in the trade papers, as the backbone of the industry. And by one of the industry's leaders too! Has the "worm" turned?

Let anyone think that this be a pipe dream let me quote from the trade announcement of Motion Pictures' Greatest Year as signed by Mr. George J. Schaefer, who, in business life, is vice-president in charge of sales for United Artists:

"... Theatre owners have been and always will be the backbone of our business and there can be no serious or lasting crisis in an industry which can so speedily and effectively throw its resources and energies behind a plan of mutual help.

"... I believe that when the Drive is over, the actual box office benefits will be so marked and the goodwill built, so widespread that the entire business world will see in it a new record for cooperation in any industry.

"It is the theatre men alone who have made this possible. For on them rests the duty of putting the Drive over. And thus far, no work has been too hard ... no demands too great.

"The General Committee looks forward to the next four months with utmost confidence, knowing that the hardest task ... that of building and sustaining public interest ... is in the capable hands of the theatre operator.

"... And the thanks of everyone whose lives touch motion pictures ... will be grateful to those who have really made the Drive a success ... the theatre owners of America."

Now that one of the industry's foremost sales executives has stated publicly how much the exhibitor means to movie business and what an important factor he is, the writer would like to get a few things off his chest.

Why do distributors try to drive the exhibitor ("the

backbone of our business") by harsh and unfair sales policies? The government would also like to have that question answered.

Why are circuit-controlled theatres trying to drive independents to the wall by choking off product, cut-throat tactics, etc.? The government would like to know this, too.

And when the Drive has been pronounced a success, Mr. Schaefer says everyone, whose lives touch motion pictures, will give grateful thanks to the theatre owners of America.

We cannot help but wonder if the distributors will be numbered among the "everyone," or will they go on wringing the last penny out of film rentals.

We sincerely hope that Mr. Schaefer wasn't paying us mere "lip services."

### BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 2

#### MGM

"Hold That Kiss," with Maureen O'Sullivan, Dennis O'Keefe and Mickey Rooney, produced by John W. Considine and directed by Edwin L. Marin, from a screen play by Stanley Rauh: Good-Fair.

"Swiss Miss," with Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Della Lind and Walter Woolf King, produced by Hal Roach and directed by John G. Blystone, from a screen play by James Parrot and Charles Nelson: Fair-Poor.

"Yellow Jack," with Robert Montgomery and Virginia Bruce, produced by Jack Cummings and directed by George B. Seitz, from a screen play by Edward Chodorov: Good.

"Three Comrades," with Robert Taylor, Franchot Tone, Margaret Sullivan and Robert Young, produced by Joseph L. Manckiewicz and directed by Frank Borzage, from a screen play by F. Scott Fitzgerald and Edward E. Paramore: Excellent-Good.

"The Toy Wife," with Luise Rainer, Melvyn Douglas, Robert Young and Barbara O'Neil, produced by Merian C. Cooper and directed by Richard Thorpe, from a screen play by Zoe Akins: Very Good-Fair.

"Woman Against Woman," with Herbert Marshall, Virginia Bruce and Mary Astor, produced by Edward Chodorov and directed by Robert Sinclair, from a screen play by Edward Chodorov: Good-Fair.

"Lord Jeff," with Freddie Bartholomew and Mickey Rooney, produced by Frank Davis and directed by Sam Wood, from a screen play by James K. McGuinness: Good-Fair.

"Port of Seven Seas," with Wallace Beery, Maureen O'Sullivan, Frank Morgan and John Beal, produced by Henry Henigson and directed by James Whale, from a screen play by Preston Sturges: Good-Poor.

"Fast Company," with Melvyn Douglas, Florence Rice and Claire Dodd, produced by Frederick Stephani and directed by Edward Buzzell, from a screen play by Marco Page and Harold Tarshis: Good-Fair.

"Shopworn Angel," with Margaret Sullivan, James Stewart and Walter Pidgeon, produced by Joseph L. Manckiewicz and directed by H. C. Potter, from a screen play by Waldo Salt: Good.

"Love Finds Andy Hardy," with Mickey Rooney, Lewis Stone and Judy Garland, directed by George B. Seitz, from a screen play by William Ludwig: Excellent-Very Good.

"The Chaser," with Dennis O'Keefe and Ann Morriss, produced by Frank Davis and directed by Edwin L. Marin, from a screen play by Everett Freeman, Harry Ruskin, Bella and Samuel Spewack: Good-Poor.

"The Crowd Roars," with Robert Taylor, Maureen O'Sullivan, Edward Arnold and Frank Morgan, produced by Sam Zimbalist and directed by Richard Thorpe, from a screen play by Thomas Lennon, George Bruce and George Oppenheimer: Excellent-Good.

Forty-two pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 9; Very Good-Fair, 3; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good, 8; Good-Fair, 12; Good-Poor, 2; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 1.

The first 42 of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows:

Excellent, 3; Excellent-Very Good, 3; Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 6; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 13; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 4.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1938

No. 39

### A WAY FOR THE PRODUCERS TO SHOW THEIR SINCERITY

One of the moves that would show that the producers have changed their mind, and that they intend to treat with the independent exhibitors candidly and sincerely, should be the dissolution of that hybrid organization, called Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America. They gained control of it by subsidizing it, through the theatres they control, for the purpose of using it as a means of "muddying the waters," so that the public might be confused. They used it to battle the exhibitor efforts for correcting the industry evils by means of legislation.

It is no longer a secret, either to the lawmakers, in the different states as well as in Washington, or to a large section of the public, that this organization is supported by producer money. Its existence has, therefore, ceased to be of any real value except as a nuisance. Consequently, its dissolution should be effected at once. Its maintenance is a proof to the independent theatre owners that the producers, although they profess that they have changed, inwardly remain the same—selfish, greedy, and unwilling to give an inch unless they are compelled to.

How long could that organization remain in life without the money they pour into its treasury every month in the form of dues from affiliated theatres? And how long could its president continue issuing statements as to what policy the producers should adopt in treating with independent exhibitors?

How much faith can the independent exhibitors have in the producers' profession of good faith when they see them continue employing the old tactics?

### LENGTH OF FEATURES INCREASING

Some time ago HARRISON'S REPORTS found it necessary to call the attention of the industry to the fact that the short-length features produced were too many.

In a recent issue of *Contact*, the house organ of the Philadelphia exhibitor organization criticized the fact that many of the features are still short.

A checkup made by this paper discloses the following facts:

Out of one hundred feature pictures reviewed in HARRISON'S REPORTS beginning with the issue of June 4 and ending with the issue of September 10, fourteen have been short enough for complaint. Here is a list of them:

Company	Title	Min.
COLUMBIA: .....	"Convicted" .....	54
	"Highway Patrol" .....	57
	"Reformed" .....	61
METRO: .....	"Blockheads" .....	56
	"Woman Against Woman" .....	60
PARAMOUNT: .....	"Bulldog Drummond in Africa" .....	58
	"Boo-oo" .....	60
	"Border G-Man" .....	60
RKO: .....	"Blond Cheat" .....	61
	"Safety in Numbers" .....	58
	"Time Out for Murder" .....	59
20TH CENTURY-FOX: .....	"Panamint's Bad Man" .....	59
	"Speed to Burn" .....	61
WARNER BROS.: .....	"Mr. Chump" .....	60

Though the average length of the features has been increased considerably, there is still room for improvement.

### ONE DIRECT BENEFICIAL EFFECT AS A RESULT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S SUIT

One of the first beneficial results of the Government's suit against the major companies has been the return of courage into the hearts of the independent exhibitors. They have, in fact, gained so much courage that dozens of theatres throughout the country have been either built or projected. And most of these theatres are built in localities where the affiliated theatres have control.

These exhibitors are not worrying where the film will come from. So confident do they feel as to the ability of the Government to break the affiliated theatres' stranglehold upon picture selling!

Given equal chances in the buying of choice pictures, the independent manager has it all over the manager of an affiliated theatre. There are independents who are operating their theatres successfully running against affiliated theatres even now, when they are able to buy only what the affiliated theatres do not want. You may imagine what will happen when the market is thrown wide-open.

The peculiar thing about making picture-buying accessible to all by removing the present restrictions is the fact that producers themselves will profit from it. Their good pictures will find a wider market, and naturally will bring in more money for them. And when their good pictures bring in more money, they will have no incentive to make pictures of inferior grades.

Unfortunately they cannot see it that way, any more than they could see that the cleaning up of the pictures would react to their benefit. They have always been reluctant in instituting reforms. Having the power, they fear to relinquish any of it. It is only when they are compelled to do so by some superior agency that they realize how better is the new order from the old order of things.

### THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)

#### The Weekly Payment Gag on Shorts

Several years ago MGM injected an innovation into the selling of films with a weekly payment plan for short subjects. It was not long before the other majors discovered what a godsend the plan was and one by one followed suit. This year each major company is trying to foist the weekly payment plan for short subjects upon exhibitors.

The WPP is very simple. The distributor simply computes the market value (not entertainment value) of the subjects for the year and breaks down the lump sum into 52 equal weekly payments.

The inequity from such a procedure arises from the fact that the exhibitor is forced to pay for shorts that he did not run and probably had no use for in the first place. Not only that but the majority of the reels produced today are so lacking in novelty and entertainment value that they have no business being on even a third rate screen.

When an exhibitor signs a contract for pictures at a given figure he is legally obligated to "play or pay." In the event he does not play the pictures for which he has contracted the accepted industry practice is settlement on the basis of 50% of the contract price at the expiration of the contract. Under WPP the exhibitor has no recourse, for he has completely paid for the contract even though he has been able or willing to play only a small portion of the shorts produced.

(Continued on last page)



### **"Juvenile Court" with Paul Kelly, Rita Hayworth and Frankie Darro**

(Columbia, Sept. 15; running time, 58 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining program melodrama, revolving around the regeneration of juvenile delinquents. Since the production of "Dead End," many pictures dealing with this theme have been made, and this version suffers somewhat by comparison. The far-fetched story is developed in a routine manner; and the production is ordinary. There is some excitement in the end, but it is not of the pleasurable kind for it is brought about by a robbery committed by a young boy. The romance is pleasant:—

Frankie Darro, a slum resident, hated the police, particularly after his brother, a murderous gangster, was convicted and sentenced to the electric chair. Both he and his sister (Rita Hayworth) treat Paul Kelly, the lawyer who represented their brother, with contempt, for they felt he was incompetent. Kelly convinces Miss Hayworth that there was nothing he could have done. He enlists her aid in a plan to help boys living in slum districts; Kelly induces the officials to permit him to organize the boys and train them to work with the police instead of against them. Darro becomes a member; at a benefit performance staged by the club, the cashier collects a large sum of money. Darro steals it, feeling that with this money he could get a good lawyer to fight for his brother. He forces three of his friends to run away with him in a stolen car. But they meet with an accident, and one of the boys is injured. Darro suddenly realizes how wrong he had been and goes back; he returns the money and gives himself up. Kelly vouches for him and obtains his release. Darro is happy when he learns that his sister was going to marry Kelly.

Michael L. Simmons, Robert E. Kent, and Henry Taylor wrote the original screen play; D. Ross Lederman directed it. In the cast are Hally Chester, Don Latoree, David Gorcey, Dick Selzer, and others.

Morally unsuitable for children. Class B.

### **"Campus Confessions" with Betty Grable, William Henry and Hank Luisetti**

(Paramount [1938-39], Sept. 16; time, 66 min.)

Typical college program fare. Except for the fact that basketball is used as the college sport instead of football, it is developed strictly in accordance with the formula set for these pictures—even to the closing scenes in which the leading player is brought into the game during the last few minutes to play and wins the game for his team. It might do better than average business, however, if properly advertised for Hank Luisetti. All American basketball player, is in the cast and plays on a few occasions; and the game itself has become extremely popular in the past few years:—

Since Thurston Hall was the main contributor to his Alma Mater, the college board is compelled to accept his ruling that sports were not to be stressed. This angers the students, who regretted the fact that they did not have a winning team in any sport. When Hall's son (William Henry) arrives as a student at the college, he is disliked by all because of his snobbishness; but he changes in time and is unhappy because he cannot make friends. Betty Grable, one of the students, feels sorry for him. In an effort to make amends, Henry suggests that Luisetti and the other members of the basketball team be his guests for the summer, since his father would be in Europe; the idea was that they could practice and develop into a good team. As a matter of fact, Henry shows promise as a player and is made a member of the team. Once back at school, Henry surprises every one by his change in manner and appearance; Miss Grable falls in love with him. The students are overjoyed when their team wins all the basketball games. But Hall returns and insists that the team be disbanded. He changes his mind, however, when he watches them play; he is particularly proud of his son.

Lloyd Corrigan and Erwin Gelsey wrote the original screen play; George Archainvud directed it. In the cast are Eleanore Whitney, John Arledge, Fritz Feld, Roy Gordon, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Room Service" with the Marx Brothers, Lucille Ball and Frank Albertson**

(RKO [1938-39], Sept. 30; time, 78 min.)

A good comedy. The Marx Brothers change their routine somewhat—that is, they are not as unrestrained as usual; furthermore, Harpo does not play the harp nor does Chico play the piano. As in the play, most of the action takes place in one hotel room, where Groucho, a shoe-string theatrical producer, and his friends try to outwit the hotel manager so as to stay in their quarters and close a deal with a backer. The methods they use to accomplish this, such as pretending that the author had the measles, and later that he had committed suicide, are so comical that there is no doubt of their effect on an audience. In spite of the fact that the action is concentrated mostly in one room, the pace is fast, for something is happening every minute. The romance is pleasant:—

Groucho and all the actors who were rehearsing in his new play live at a hotel run by Groucho's brother-in-law (Cliff Dunstan) without paying any bills. Just when Groucho was at the point of closing a deal, the hotel auditor (Donald MacBride) arrives and insists that Groucho and all his actors leave at once. But Groucho, by pretending that the author (Frank Albertson) had the measles and was, therefore, unable to move, stays in the room so as to keep an appointment with the backer's representative. He receives a check for \$15,000; but so many things happen while the representative is there that when he leaves he stops payment on the check. Groucho and his gang know of this; but, realizing that the check was drawn on a California bank, they permit MacBride, who had become their friend, to finance them, knowing that it would take five days for him to find out about the check. On the opening night of the show, MacBride receives word from his bank about the check and is determined to close the show; but again Groucho detains him, this time by pretending that Albertson had killed himself. The show goes on, and it turns out to be a smash success, which meant that MacBride and all the others would make a profit.

The plot was adapted from the play by John Murray and Allan Boretz; Morrie Ryskind wrote the screen play, William Seiter directed it, and Pandro S. Berman produced it. In the cast are Ann Miller, Philip Loeb, Philip Wood, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Renegade Ranger" with George O'Brien and Rita Hayworth**

(RKO, Sept. 16; time, 59 min.)

A fairly good Western. Typical of the George O'Brien pictures, it has exciting fist fights and thrilling horseback riding. And, because of the constant danger to the hero, one is held in fair suspense throughout. The occasional musical interpolations are well rendered:—

O'Brien, a Captain in the Texas Rangers, is assigned to the job of arresting Rita Hayworth, daughter of a well-known Spanish family, on the charge of having murdered a wealthy rancher, who, with his partner (William Royle), had bought up her ranch at a forced tax sale, just as they had done with other ranches. Once O'Brien gets all the facts together, he realizes that Royle was a crook. In order to protect Miss Hayworth, O'Brien arrests her; but Royle outwits him by having his men kidnap her from the jail. O'Brien, in company with the Mexican band that Miss Hayworth had formed to fight Royle, goes after the villain and his men and rescues Miss Hayworth. He forces Royle to confess to his partner's murder, thereby clearing Miss Hayworth. Having fallen in love with each other, O'Brien and Miss Hayworth plan to marry.

Bennett Coen wrote the story, and Oliver Drake, the screen play; David Howard directed it, and Bert Gilroy produced it. In the cast are Ray Whitley, Tim Holt, Charles Stevens, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### "Sons of the Legion" with Lynne Overman and Donald O'Connor

(Paramount [1938-39], Sept. 23; time, 61 min.)

A fair program entertainment, with human appeal. It presents its patriotic theme in a way to appeal to the masses; and, if properly exploited, it should do well, particularly in small towns where the American Legion is active. There are a few situations that touch one's emotions, and others that provoke laughter. And in the closing scenes there is plentiful excitement, due to the efforts of the club members to help a young boy, whose gangster father was trying to force him to run away with him. The performances are good particularly that of Donald O'Connor, as a tough youngster who becomes regenerated; Lynne Overman plays his part with understanding and wins one's sympathy. The mild romance is unimportant:—

Tim Holt, an American, organizes the young sons of American Legion members, in an effort to teach them the blessings of democracy and the meaning of Americanism. The two young sons of Overman are the leaders, and are heartbroken when their father informs them that they could not join; they do not know that Overman had been dishonorably discharged from the Army and that, therefore, they would not be eligible for membership. O'Connor, a tough youngster whose father was supposedly dead, joins, thinking he could use the boys; but in time it means something to him. His father (Edward Pawley), an escaped convict, returns and insists that O'Connor run away with him; the members of the club rush after Pawley and save O'Connor; they turn Pawley over to the police. Since he had been responsible for Overman's disgrace, his confession clears Overman, who obtains honorable discharge papers. His sons are happy when they are finally able to join the patriotic organization.

Lillie Hayward, Lewis Foster, and Robert F. McGowan wrote the original story and screen play; James Hogan directed it, and Stuart Walker produced it. In the cast are Evelyn Keyes, Elizabeth Patterson, Wm. Frawley, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Mr. Doodle Kicks Off" with Joe Penner and June Travis

(RKO [1938-39], Oct. 7; time, 77 min.)

An amusing program college football picture. Although the story is routine, it is more entertaining than most program pictures of this type because of the comedy angle. The football end of the story is not treated too seriously; as a matter of fact it is burlesqued, for each time Joe Penner, one of the college players, gets on the field the audience forgets about the game due to Penner's antics, which provoke laughter. A few songs are well interpolated, without interfering with the action. The romance is developed according to formula:—

Penner, leader of a swing band, is annoyed when his millionaire father (William B. Davidson) insists that he go back to college. Davidson offers a \$200,000 endowment to the college if Penner could be turned into a good football player; but Penner hates the game and refuses to join the team. Knowing that Penner was in love with his daughter (June Travis), the Dean suggests that, for the sake of the college, she induce him to join the team; the scheme works. Because of Penner's helplessness on the field, the other players are compelled to work out plays in which they could protect him and help him make touchdowns. Penner, believing he alone was responsible for the touchdowns, becomes conceited. Miss Travis tries to tell him what was actually happening, but he refuses to listen. He finds out about it in the last game and, during the first half, walks off the field. Miss Travis gets word to him that she loved him; this inspires him and he goes into the game again and this time helps his team win. The college gets the endowment and Penner wins Miss Travis.

Mark Kelly wrote the story, and Bert Granet, the screen play; Leslie Goodwins directed it, and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are Richard Lane, Ben Alexander, Billy Gilbert, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Hold That Co-Ed" with George Murphy, Marjorie Weaver and John Barrymore

(20th Century-Fox [1938-39], Sept. 16; time, 80 min.)

A good college comedy. It satirizes politics and football in a good-natured and novel way, at times arousing hearty laughter; and for those who are not interested in either subject there is music and romance. John Barrymore is excellent as the politically ambitious Governor; he caricatures the part, but so cleverly, that one is in sympathy with him. Most of the comedy is provoked by Joan Davis, who brings fame to her college by joining the football team and helping them win with her remarkable kicking ability. The closing scenes, in which she fights against a windstorm to make a touchdown, are the most comical. The romance is pleasant:—

George Murphy, a football coach, arrives at the state college from which he had received a contract, only to find a broken-down school building with no facilities or equipment for sports. He urges the students to rebel and to demand that the Governor make an appropriation for the school. Led by Murphy, the students storm the Governor's office, where Marjorie Weaver, the Governor's secretary, meets them and asks them to leave; but Barrymore, the Governor who wanted to become a Senator, realizing that he could get a great deal of publicity by building up the school, appropriates a large sum of money to them, demanding that they get the finest of everything, including a stadium for football games. The team wins many games. But Barrymore's political opponent (George Barbier) makes a bet with Barrymore that the college he was sponsoring could beat the state college, the loser to withdraw from the Senatorial race. Up until the very end, it looks as if the state college would lose, but by a freak play Miss Davis makes the winning touchdown. Murphy and Miss Weaver, who had fallen in love with each other, are overjoyed.

Karl Tunberg and Don Ettlinger wrote the story, and they and Jack Yellen, the screen play; George Marshall directed it, and David Hempstead produced it. In the cast are Jack Haley, Ruth Terry, Donald Meek, Johnny Downs, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Strange Boarders" with Tom Walls and Renee Saint-Cyr

(Gaiety-British [1938-39], Aug. 1; time, 71 min.)

A pretty good espionage melodrama. In spite of the fact that the settings and accents are typically British and that the players are unknown here, it should find favor with American audiences because of the interesting story and fairly exciting action; it holds one in suspense throughout. The romantic interludes occasionally slow up the action but they help to relieve the tension. As is usual in stories of this type, the plot is at times far-fetched. Most of the excitement is concentrated in the closing scenes where the hero, a member of the British Secret Service, rounds up the gang of spies:—

Tom Walls is annoyed when, on his wedding night, he is compelled to leave his wife (Renee Saint-Cyr) in order to investigate an important case involving spies; he is forbidden to tell her about his mission, and, since she did not know that he was in the Secret Service, she thinks he was running after another woman. His investigations lead him to a boarding house, where he registers under an assumed name; he is shocked when his wife follows him there. The first person he gets proof against is the servant girl; he kidnaps her and locks her in his apartment. But one of her agents helps her escape and she returns to the boarding house, to Wall's surprise. There he is surrounded by the members of the gang, all boarders, who plan to kill him and his wife. Quick thinking on Wall's part brings help to them. He rounds up the gang, and then proceeds on his belated honeymoon with his wife.

The plot was adapted from the novel by E. Phillips Oppenheim. Sidney Gilliat and A. R. Rawlinson wrote the screen play, and Herbert Mason directed it. In the cast are George Curzon, C. V. France, Leon M. Lion, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



Film salesmen will make every effort to impress upon their accounts the fact that they cannot sell a contract unless short subjects are on the WPP. It is my belief that this is not true—that shorts can be bought on a reel basis, that until the producers make shorts, all of which have entertainment value, the exhibitor is in no way obligated to pay for the entire contract at its full price.

Of the new season's reels already screened by the writer it looks as if the 1938-39 season will be a repetition of the 1937-38 season—excess newsreel footage, dated vaudeville acts, drag travelogues, and orchestras banked in the corner of a night club.

Not until money and brains start going into short subject production can the exhibitor be expected to shoulder part of the responsibility.

### Radio's Threats

Movies' friendly enemy, radio, is reported to be wailing and gnashing its teeth because it has received none of the large advertising appropriation for the "Motion Pictures Are Your Best Entertainment" campaign.

Reprisals are threatened because broadcasting executives assume that they have been very generous to the screen. According to *Variety* they base that assumption upon four points: (1) Amount of gratis time for previews, gossip spiels, nutshell dramatizations; (2) Extent of plugging for film tunes; (3) Use of platters and free chatter sent out by Hollywood praiseries; (4) Number of stars employed on radio programs.

Let us break down their generosity, point by point, and see how much of it is real and how much fancied.

In the first place, the time given over to previews seldom if ever interferes with any commercial program. The time it consumes is invariably taken away from a sustaining program of the run-of-the-mill variety. As for the gossip spiels, I doubt very much if there is a single showman who would even as much as whisper a protest if they were permanently barred from the air. Of the free air time only nutshell dramatizations could, by any stretch of the imagination, be classed as generosity on the part of the broadcasters.

In the second place, where would radio be if film tunes were suddenly taken off the air? They had a short taste of such a situation recently when the publishing houses controlled by Warner Bros. denied them the privilege of broadcasting the songs on which they held the copyrights.

Thirdly, most stations have been almost as glad to accept free platters as the Hollywood "praiseries" were to send them. Those same were played on local stations for local theatre managers and not for the industry itself.

Lastly, how the broadcasters could have even dared to cite the employment of stars on radio programs as an act of generosity is beyond me. Have they been completely deaf to the pleas and threats of exhibitors over the air appearances of picture stars? Lest the radio executives think that they are doing the motion picture industry any favors by putting stars on the air, thus making it attractive for prospective theatre patrons to sit home and listen to the radio, let me be one of the thousands of exhibitors to tell them that they are sadly mistaken.

Make no mistake about it—pictures owe radio nothing. Whatever radio has done for pictures it has been fully repaid. Possibly not in cash, but in building a reputation for itself.

## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 3

### Paramount

"Cocoanut Grove," with Fred MacMurray and Harriet Hilliard, produced by George M. Arthur and directed by Alfred Santell, from a screen play by Sy Bartlett and Olive Cooper: Very Good-Fair.

"Hunted Men," with Lloyd Nolan, Mary Carlisle and Lynne Overman, produced by Stuart Walker and directed by Louis King, from a screen play by Horace McCoy and William R. Lipman: Good-Fair.

"You and Me," with George Raft and Sylvia Sydney, produced and directed by Fritz Lang, from a screen play by Virginia VanUpp: Good-Fair.

"Prison Farm," with Shirley Ross, Lloyd Nolan and John Howard, directed by Louis King, from a screen play by Eddie Welch, Robert Yost and Stuart Anthony: Good-Fair.

"Bar 20 Justice," with William Boyd, George Hayes and

Russell Hayden, produced by Harry Sherman and directed by Lesley Selander, from a screen play by Arnold Belgard: Good-Poor.

"Tropic Holiday," with Martha Raye, Bob Burns, Dorothy Lamour and Ray Milland, produced by Arthur Hornblow, Jr., and directed by Theodore Reed, from a screen play by Don Hartman, Frank Butler, John C. Moffitt and Duke Attelberry: Very Good-Good.

"Boo-oo," with Colin Tapley, produced and directed by Clyde E. Elliott, from a screen play by Robert E. Welsh: Fair-Poor.

"Professor Beware," with Harold Lloyd, produced by Mr. Lloyd and directed by Elliot Nugent, from a screen play by Delmer Daves: Very Good-Fair.

"Bulldog Drummond in Africa," with John Howard, Heather Angel and H. B. Warner, produced by Harold Hurley and directed by Louis King, from a screen play by Garnett Weston: Fair.

"The Texans," with Joan Bennett and Randolph Scott, produced by Lucien Hubbard and directed by James Hogan, from a screen play by Bertram Millhauser, Paul Sloane and William W. Haines: Very Good-Fair.

Fifty-four pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Fair, 5; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 12; Good-Poor, 7; Fair, 11; Fair-Poor, 7; Poor, 3.

Fifty-three pictures were released during the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns; they were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 5; Good, 9; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 9; Fair-Poor, 17; Poor, 3.

### RKO

"Blind Alibi," with Richard Dix, Whitney Bourne and Eduardo Ciannelli, produced by Cliff Reid and directed by Lew Landers, from a screen play by Lionel Houser, Larry Segall and Ron Ferguson: Fair.

"The Saint in New York," with Louis Hayward and Kay Sutton, produced by William Sistrom and directed by Ben Holmes, from a screen play by Charles Kaufman and Mortimer Offner: Good-Fair.

"Blond Cheat," with Joan Fontaine and Derrick DeMarney, produced by William Sistrom and directed by Joseph Santley, from a screen play by Charles Kaufman, Paul Yawitz, Viola Brothers Shaw and Harry Segall: Fair-Poor.

"Border G Man," with George O'Brien, produced by Bert Gilroy and directed by David Howard, from a screen play by Oliver Drake: Good-Poor.

"Having Wonderful Time," with Ginger Rogers and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., produced by Pandro S. Berman and directed by Alfred Santell, from a screen play by Arthur Kober: Very Good-Good.

"Crime Ring," with Allan Lane and Frances Mercer, produced by Cliff Reid and directed by Leslie Goodwins, from a screen play by Gladys Atwater and J. Robert Bren: Fair.

"Sky Giant," with Richard Dix, Chester Morris and Joan Fontaine, produced by Robert Sisk and directed by Lew Landers, from a screen play by Lionel Houser: Fair.

"Mother Carey's Chickens," with Anne Shirley, Ruby Keeler, James Ellison and Fay Bainter, produced by Pandro S. Berman and directed by Rowland V. Lee, from a screen play by S. K. Lauren and Gertrude Purcell: Good-Fair.

"I'm from the City," with Joe Penner, produced by William Sistrom and directed by Ben Holmes, from a screen play by Nicholas T. Barrows, Robert St. Clair and John Grey: Fair-Poor.

"Painted Desert," with George O'Brien, produced by Bert Gilroy and directed by David Howard, from a screen play by John Rathmell and Oliver Drake: Fair-Poor.

Forty-one pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 7; Good-Poor, 7; Fair, 8; Fair-Poor, 14; Poor, 2.

The first 41 of the 1936-37 season were rated as follows: Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 9; Fair, 11; Fair-Poor, 12; Poor, 4.



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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

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No. 40

### TAXATION OF LOWER DENOMINATION TICKETS

There are many problems besides Greater Movie Season campaigns on which independent exhibitors and producer-distributors could work together harmoniously.

One of such problems is the taxing of admission tickets. Talk emanating from Washington indicates that the U. S. Government may seek to tax admission tickets of lower than forty-cent denomination. No limit has been indicated as to what price tickets will be exempted. Even the ten-cent tickets may be taxed. It is the duty of every one connected with the industry, therefore, to prepare himself to resist the revision of the ticket tax.

This paper realizes that the Government must find money in some way to meet the constantly increasing budget, but if the lower than forty cent denomination tickets should be taxed, not only the Government will not collect much more than the amount it is collecting now, but also the exhibitors will find their profits vanishing, for this reason: since the admissions are now as high as the "traffic" will bear, the exhibitors will not be able to pass the tax on to the public. Consequently, the tax will have to come out of the exhibitors' profits.

Now, if the exhibitors were compelled to pay to the Federal Government, in the form of ticket tax, some of their profits, a large number of them will not be able to stay in business, unless they should recoup themselves of most of that expense from some source. They cannot reduce the labor item, because the unions will not stand for it. And they cannot reduce their rents, because the landlords will not stand for it. There is then just one item from which they can take it out—film rentals: the distributors will be compelled to stand for it, because, if they will not, they will run the risk of losing all the film rentals from those exhibitors who will be compelled to shut down their theatres.

That is why this paper has said that every one connected with the motion picture industry must prepare himself to resist revision of the admission-ticket tax. It is a problem on which exhibitors and producer-distributors can and must work together.

### THE CASE OF COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

The subject of commercial advertising on the screen has been treated on these pages so often that additional comment should not have been necessary. Unfortunately a large number of exhibitors still insist upon flashing on their screens national commercial advertising, for which they receive money.

As said before, the newspaper people watch the screens for such advertising and when they detect it they pass the word around to other newspapers, with the result that the theatre of the offending exhibitor is not given as much free publicity as it was given before.

When an exhibitor shows on his screen national commercial advertising he encroaches upon the field of the newspapers. And it is neither fair nor wise for exhibitors to engage in the other fellow's business, particularly when such business is foreign to that of a moving picture theatre.

### THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)

#### One of the Most Important 1938 Events

Reading anybody's list of the ten major events in the 1938 movie year, the event that will strike one as being the most important will unquestionably be the government's anti-trust suit.

Regardless of what the outcome will be, drastic changes will occur in the distribution as well as the exhibition of moving pictures.

How radical such changes will be, no one can predict, no matter how well informed.

It is interesting to note on this subject the opinion of W. R. Wilkerson, editor and publisher of *The Hollywood Reporter*, who is very close to production:

"Unquestionably this Government suit, whether tried or passed over in a consent decree, will leave its mark on production, through insisting that a new, and more economical method be employed in the making of screen entertainment.

"To save argument, we must grant that the four or five majors who own large theatre strings will have to divorce those houses from their own production, whether by organizing separate corporate structures for production and distribution, with no interlocking directorate and no control of one corporation by the other, or by the outright forced sale of their 2600 or 2800 theatres with a long term contract for the exhibition of product going with the sale. In either case there will be new demands placed on production that will NOT permit the making of any picture costing better than, say \$1,500,000, because the risk would be too great.

"As at present, Paramount with part ownership in over 1000 theatres, Warners with 527, Loew's with 119, RKO with 124, and Century-Fox with 42 per cent ownership in around 520 houses, figure on a lot of money in the bag, for the exhibition of any of their pictures—more on the best and substantial return on others—from their own group theatres. This enables them to take gambles. Should they be forced to lose control of those exhibition outlets, which in addition to giving them money, influence other theatres in the play and exploitation of the same picture, it would be necessary for the producers to proceed a bit more carefully and, certainly more economically with their production."

This writer believes that Mr. Wilkerson's vision is slightly beclouded because, no doubt, of that very proximity to production which prompted this editorial. Does he really think that, if divorce comes, the producer-owned theatres will pass out of existence and that there will be no longer any need for quality pictures? And does he assume that the producers will have a narrower market for their product? Does he really feel that the independent exhibitors are incapable of exploiting pictures to the fullest extent unless they are supervised by producer press agents? (See Mr. Schaefer's recent statement.) Are we to understand that the same care will not be exercised, and as great economy in production will not be practiced?

Does he think that the producer-owned theatres now play a "lemon" much more promptly and much more whole-

(Continued on last page)



**"Too Hot to Handle" with Clark Gable,  
Myrna Loy and Walter Pidgeon**

(MGM [1938-39], Sept. 16; time, 105 min.)

Excellent mass entertainment. In addition to the drawing power of the stars, it offers the type of story that should get word-of-mouth advertising to insure even better results at the box-office than ordinary pictures with these stars would get. Fast action and thrills are combined with romance and comedy; even though some of the incidents are implausible, audiences will overlook this fact because of the exciting way in which they are presented. The situation in which a newsreel truck collides with a plane, causing the plane to crash and catch on fire, should hold spectators in tense suspense; but there are many situations, equally breathtaking. The comedy is unusually good; most of it is caused by the tricks two rival newsreel cameramen play on each other to obtain scoops. As for the romance, it is believable and charming, and ends in a way to please the spectator:—

Having been scooped by cameraman Clark Gable, who had sent faked newsreel shots from Shanghai to his home office in New York, Walter Pidgeon, rival cameraman, plans a faked scoop for himself; he engages Myrna Loy, an expert aviatrix, to fly from Manila to Shanghai, supposedly on a mercy errand to bring serum to war-torn Shanghai. But Gable gets wind of what is going on and drives into the landing field, his purpose being to get in front of the plane in order to block out Pidgeon; but his driver gets too close to the plane, thereby crashing it. It catches on fire; Gable rescues Miss Loy just in time, only to find out about the trick. In the meantime his sound man (Leo Carrillo) had recorded the entire conversation. But when Miss Loy tells him that she had flown the plane in order to earn enough money to get together an outfit to scout for her brother, an aviator who had been lost in the jungle, Gable promises to help her. They all go back to New York, Gable for the purpose of getting Miss Loy, with whom he had fallen in love, a job with his outfit; everything works out all right until Pidgeon's employer obtains the crash reel and exposes Miss Loy. She is humiliated and parts from Gable. Gable and Pidgeon, feeling responsible for the whole thing, sell all their equipment and send the money to Miss Loy for the expedition. They then follow her to the jungle. Eventually, after capture by savage Voodoo tribes and many other exciting events, they find Miss Loy's brother and rescue him. Once back in New York, Miss Loy realizes what Gable had done for her; she rushes to him for a reconciliation.

Len Hammond wrote the story, and Laurence Stallings and John Lee Mahin, the screen play; Jack Conway directed it, and Lawrence Weingarten produced it. In the cast are Walter Connolly, Johnny Hines, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Wanted by the Police" with Frankie  
Darro, Evalyn Knapp and Robert Kent**

(Monogram [1938-39], Sept. 21; time, 59 min.)

A fair program racketeer melodrama. In addition to the fast, and at times exciting, action, it has human appeal, which is brought about by the unhappiness the hero and his mother suffer as a result of the hero's innocently becoming involved with

crooks. One is held in suspense throughout; particularly exciting are the closing scenes, where the hero risks his life to trap the crooks. The romantic interest is mildly pleasant:—

Having graduated from high school, Frankie Darro decides to go to work to help support his mother; his sister (Miss Knapp) had been carrying the burden for a long time. He obtains a position as a garage mechanic; his other duties were to drive cars for the owner (Matty Fain). To his horror, he learns that Fain was engaged in the stolen car racket and that he, by driving a car across the border line, had become one of the gang. Threatened with exposure by the gang, Darro is forced to continue with the work; he is a witness to a murder committed by the gang. His mother (Lillian Elliott), noticing how depressed Darro was, finally forces him to tell her the truth. She enlists the help of her daughter's fiance (Kent), a policeman, to help clear Darro. Darro and Kent work out a scheme to trap the crooks; but a tipoff by one of the gang changes their plans somewhat. Darro manages, despite a gun wound, to get in touch with Kent; the gang is rounded up and Darro is cleared.

Donn O'Mullally and Sally Sandin wrote the story, and Wellyn Totman, the screen play; Howard Bretherton directed it, and Lindsley Parson produced it. In the cast are Don Rowan, Sam Bernard, Thelma White, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Crime Takes a Holiday" with Jack Holt  
and Marcia Ralston**

(Columbia [1938-39], Oct. 5; time, 59 min.)

A fair program racketeer melodrama. It is developed according to formula, and is somewhat in the line of recent melodramas, in which a courageous District Attorney sets out to clean up racketeering. Although the production is not lavish, it has fast action and enough excitement to please the average follower of gangster melodramas. The closing scenes, in which the leader is finally trapped, are exciting, even though they are slightly far-fetched. The romance is of little importance:—

Jack Holt, District Attorney, is known for his honest efforts to rid the city of racketeering. But he is hampered in his work, for the leader's identity was unknown to him; in the meantime, he is pestered by a Citizens' League to take further action. When Holt finally does arrest members of the gang, he cannot get witnesses to testify against them, for the shopkeepers, from whom they had extorted money, were frightened. A police lieutenant is killed; Holt hits upon the idea of convicting an innocent man, hoping thereby to trap the real criminals. He finally realizes that the gangster leader was none other than Douglas Dumbrie, a member of the Citizens' League, supposedly an honest business man. By a ruse, Holt gets Dumbrie to confess to the murder and the racketeering business. Holt is happy when his work is finally completed.

Henry Altimus wrote the story, and he, Jeffersonson Parker, and Charles Logue, the screen play; Lewis D. Collins directed it, and Larry Darmour produced it. In the cast are Russell Hopton, Arthur Hohl, Thomas Jackson, and others.

Suitability, Class B.



**"The Lady Objects" with Gloria Stuart  
and Lanny Ross**

(*Columbia, Sept. 9; time, 65 min.*)

Good program entertainment. It is an interesting marital drama, lavishly produced and well acted; although the story is not particularly novel, it holds one's attention. Lanny Ross sings a few good numbers; the music has been so well interpolated in the plot that it does not interfere with the action; on the contrary, it adds to the picture's entertainment value. Both the hero and the heroine, despite their mistakes, win and hold the spectator's sympathy:

Ross, an architect, is discouraged because of his inability to progress rapidly in his field. His wife (Gloria Stuart), a lawyer, cheers him up; they go to their college reunion where they meet Joan Marsh, who had become a well-known night club singer. Miss Marsh is disappointed to find that Ross had married for she had not forgotten him. Miss Stuart's ability becomes known to the head of the law firm for which she worked, and he gives her an important position; in a short time, she becomes a member of the firm. With the money she earns, she and Ross are able to live luxuriously; but he dislikes it. Tired of everything, he decides to become a singer, in order to make more money; he obtains an engagement at Miss Marsh's club. He and Miss Stuart quarrel and separate. Miss Marsh goes to Ross' apartment; he asks her to leave, but she refuses and he goes out. She drinks too much, and gets caught in the cord necklace she was wearing; she is strangled. Ross is arrested. Miss Stuart, despite Ross' objections, appears at his trial and makes so eloquent a plea to the jury about her own blindness in permitting a career to interfere with her marriage that she wins his freedom. They become reconciled; Ross becomes a famous singer.

Gladys Lehman and Charles Kenyon wrote the original screen play; Erle Kenton directed it, and William Perlberg produced it. In the cast are Robert Paige, Arthur Loft, Pierre Watkin, Roy Benson, and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.

**"Touchdown Army" with John Howard,  
Mary Carlisle and Robert Cummings**

(*Paramount [1938-39], Oct. 7; time, 70 min.*)

Just another football picture, with the familiar West Point background. At the beginning, quite a number of stock shots are used showing the cadets drilling and parading. The story is thin and is developed according to formula, with very few new angles. Football fans will find the game in the closing scenes not much to get excited about; particularly unbelievable is the final play which shows a player, who suddenly realized he was running in the wrong direction, turn around and throw the ball to another player clear across the field. The routine romance is fairly pleasant:—

Robert Cummings, a conceited football player, whose services were desired by several college teams, decides to enroll in West Point, for he felt that a uniform would dazzle the ladies. He falls in love with Mary Carlisle, the Commander's daughter and, despite regulations to the contrary, tries to

see her; this annoys John Howard, an upper classman, who, too, loved Miss Carlisle. Cummings' conceit is knocked out of him a little by his classmates; he becomes the team's best player, winning most of the games for them. Just before the big game of the year, he is told that, unless he passed his French test, he would not be permitted to play. Although Miss Carlisle was angry at him for a joke he had pulled, she agrees to coach him. At the examination he finds that the questions were the same ones she had coached him in. Thinking that she had cheated to help him, Cummings goes to the governing board and informs them that he knew the answers; but he does not involve Miss Carlisle. He is taken out of the game. During the game, Miss Carlisle finds out what had happened; she explains the matter satisfactorily by making the authorities understand that she had innocently used old test papers. Cummings is brought to the field by aeroplane, and in the last minute to play wins the game. He and Miss Carlisle are reconciled.

Lloyd Corrigan and Erwin Gelsey wrote the story and screen play; Kurt Neumann directed it. In the cast are Owen Davis, Jr., William Frawley, Minor Watson, Benny Baker, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Personal Secretary" with William Gargan  
and Joy Hodges**

(*Universal [1938-39], Sept. 9; time, 62 min.*)

A breezy program comedy-melodrama. It holds one's interest throughout, for the identity of the murderer is not disclosed until the end. Most of the comedy is brought about as a result of the conflict between the hero and the heroine, newspaper columnists, who disapproved of each other's work. There is plentiful excitement in the closing scenes, where the heroine traps the murderer, at the risk of her own life. The romance is routine, with misunderstandings and eventual reconciliation:—

William Gargan, columnist and radio commentator, is enraged when a rival columnist (Joy Hodges), whom he had never met, makes disparaging remarks about his predictions as to the outcome of a certain murder trial. He felt certain that the woman who was being tried was guilty, while Miss Hodges felt otherwise. Since Gargan did not know her, Miss Hodges is able to obtain a position as his secretary, in order to scoop him. But eventually her scheming makes her ashamed of herself, for she had fallen in love with Gargan, as he had with her. When he finds out who she was, he orders her out of the office, and tells her he does not want to see her again. But Miss Hodges, eager to prove her sincerity, goes after the murderer, who had attempted to kill Gargan. Her life is endangered when the murderer realizes she suspected him; but the timely arrival of Gargan, who had learned where she had gone, saves her life. The murderer is arrested. Gargan and Miss Hodges are reconciled, and all is forgiven.

Robert Lively and Betty Laidlaw wrote the story, and they and Charles Grayson, the screen play; Otis Garrett directed it, and Max H. Golden produced it. In the cast are Andy Devine, Ruth Donnelly, Samuel Hinds, Kay Linaker, and others.

Suitability, because of the murder, Class B.



heartedly than do independent theatres, merely because either the parent or a friendly company has produced it? If he thinks so, he is sadly mistaken. And just to cite an example, we call his attention to the fact that many a Warner picture has failed to see the screen of many a Warner theatre. If he has any doubt about it, let him ask the independent exhibitors of the Philadelphia zone.

It is manifest that Mr. Wilkerson's vision has been dimmed because of his proximity to production.

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### The MPTOA Annual Convention

In a month the Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America are scheduled to meet in convention in Oklahoma City.

In the writer's opinion this will be the most important convocation of the MPTOA since its inception.

Since their last meeting a lot has happened within the industry which might change the entire system of distribution and exhibition, i.e. the government's anti-trust suit.

To anyone unfamiliar with the membership of the MPTOA, the first impression is that the membership of the organization is composed entirely of independent exhibitors. Actually, by virtue of the fact that they own theatres, Loews, Warner Bros., Paramount, RKO, and 20th Century-Fox, are members and will be represented.

Although the writer has not seen the agenda it is reasonable to assume that much of the gathering's business session time will be devoted to discussing self-regulation and the government's suit. Unless such subjects are jockeyed off the floor the majors can be expected to tip their hands as to the future course of their respective companies.

What, if any, resolutions will be adopted to reopen the self-regulation discussions? What attitude will the MPTOA assume toward divorce? What efforts will be made to do away with block booking and enforced buying of shorts? Will the widespread practice of weekly payment plans for shorts be condemned? Will any attempts be made to show the government that the theatre owners are trying to satisfy the government's complaints in its bill of particulars without the help of outside agencies?

These are only a few of the questions for which the writer is anxiously awaiting the MPTOA Convention to answer. We sincerely hope that this year will not be a repetition of previous years' conventions where a good time was had by all and the industry was permitted to continue on its rocky road to pot.

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### The Movie Campaign and General Business

A report from a large number of the nation's leading department stores in the first week in September indicate a striking upturn in the retail business.

How much of this upturn is owed to the Greater Movie Season Campaign, conducted with vigor and enthusiasm by every branch of the industry, is hard to tell; but there is no question that it had a great deal to do with it.

When campaign plans were first formulated the necessity of merchant cooperation was quite apparent. Movies not only had to be sold to the public but also they had to be sold to (and by) the merchants of every community. Following this line of reasoning the slogan "Trade Follows The Movies" was coined for the special benefit of mercantile establishments.

How well the few words in that slogan summed up the situation, comparatively few merchants will ever realize. People are induced to leave the comforts of their homes to go to a movie. Immediately transportation companies get some of Mr. Patron's money. The corner drug store usually finds him wandering in, either before or after the show. While the patron is away from his home and in the shopping district, window shopping becomes part of the fun. In many cities if it weren't for the movies bringing people out at night the merchant might just as well turn off his window lights at six o'clock instead of eleven o'clock. In many instances there are theatres which are keeping entire blocks alive. Whenever such a theatre has a bad picture, every merchant on the block feels it.

Trade paper reports of the grosses in key cities show a marked improvement over the corresponding period of last year. Oddly enough, retail business in the same situations show improvement in about the same proportion to that of the movies.

These reports are based, for the theatres, upon downtown houses and, for the department stores, also upon downtown establishments. Since contest pictures began with August releases, in the larger communities, downtown houses were the first to feel the effects of the campaign.

The neighborhoods are just now getting contest pictures and they, along with the community merchants, can look forward to much better business.

The automobile industry boasts that it led the way out of the depression. Based on first returns, the movie industry will probably be able to say that it led the way out of the recession.

As a rule, bragging lowers the "bragger" in the estimation of those who hear him; but in this instance, bragging, and there is plenty to brag about, will produce the opposite effect. Theatre owners need have no fear of pointing out to their friends and patrons the part the industry is playing to bring about better times.

### BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 4

#### Twentieth Century-Fox

"Kentucky Moonshine," with the Ritz Brothers, Marjorie Weaver and Tony Martin, produced by Kenneth Macgowan and directed by David Butler, from a screen play by Art Arthur and M. M. Musselman: Very Good-Good.

"Rascals," with Jane Withers, Rochelle Hudson and Robert Wilcox, produced by John Stone and directed by H. Bruce Humberstone, from a screen play by Robert Ellis and Helen Logan: Good-Fair.

"Kidnapped," with Warner Baxter, Freddie Bartholomew and Arleen Whelan, produced by Kenneth Macgowan and directed by Alfred Werker, from a screen play by Sonya Levien, Eleanor Harris, Ernest Pascal and Edwin Blum: Good-Fair.

"Josette," with Simone Simon, Don Ameche and Robert Young, produced by Gene Markey and directed by Allan Dwan, from a screen play by Paul Frank and George Fraser: Good-Fair.

"One Wild Night," with June Lang and Dick Baldwin, produced by John Stone and directed by Eugene Ford, from a screen play by Charles Belden and Jerry Cady: Fair-Poor.

"Three Blind Mice," with Loretta Young and Joel McCrea, produced by Raymond Griffith and directed by William A. Seiter, from a screen play by Brown Holmes and Lynn Starling: Very Good-Good.

"Mr. Moto Takes a Chance," with Peter Lorre, Rochelle Hudson and Robert Kent, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel and directed by Norman Foster, from a screen-play by Lou Breslow and John Patrick: Good-Poor.

"Always Goodbye," with Barbara Stanwyck and Herbert Marshall, produced by Raymond Griffith and directed by Sidney Lanfield, from a screen play by Katharine Scola and Edith Skouras: Good-Fair.

"We're Going to Be Rich," with Gracie Fields, Victor McLaglen and Brian Donlevy, produced by Samuel G. Engel and directed by Monty Banks, from a screen play by Sam Hellman and Rohama Sigal: Good-Poor.

"Panamint's Bad Man," with Smith Ballew and Evelyn Daw, produced by Sol Lesser and directed by Ray Taylor, from a screen play by Luci Ward and Charles Arthur Powell: Good-Poor.

"Passport Husband," with Stuart Erwin, Pauline Moore and Joan Woodbury, produced by Sol M. Wurtzel and directed by James Tinling, from a screen play by Karen DeWolf and Robert Chapin: Fair-Poor.

"I'll Give a Million," with Warner Baxter and Marjorie Weaver, produced by Kenneth MacGowan and directed by Walter Lang, from a screen play by Boris Ingster and Milton Sperling: Good-Fair.

"Little Miss Broadway," with Shirley Temple, George Murphy and Phyllis Brooks, produced by David Hempstead and directed by Irving Cummings, from a screen play by Harry Tugend and Jack Yellen: Excellent-Good.

Fifty-seven pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent, 2; Excellent-Very Good, 2; Excellent-Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 7; Very Good-Fair, 2; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good-Fair, 21; Good-Poor, 8; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 1.

Fifty-four pictures were released during the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns; they were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 4; Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 6; Good, 11; Good-Fair, 10; Fair, 11; Fair-Poor, 8.



IN TWO SECTIONS—SECTION TWO

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XX

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1938

No. 40

(Partial Index No. 5—Pages 130 to 156 Incl.)

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Colorado Trail, The—Columbia (55 min.)	Not Reviewed	Girls' School—A. Shirley-R. Bellamy (r.)	Sept. 30
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Sons of the Legion—Paramount (61 min.)	155	(End of 1937-38 Season)	
South of Arizona—Columbia (56 min.)	Not Reviewed	<b>Beginning of 1938-39 Season</b>	
Spawn of the North—Paramount (109 min.)	142	901 Three Loves Has Nancy—Montgomery-Gaynor-Tone	
Strange Boarders—Gaumont-British (71 min.)	155	902 Boys Town—Tracy-Rooney	
Tenth Avenue Kid—Republic (65 min.)	146	903 Too Hot to Handle—Gable-Loy-Pidgeon	
Three Loves Has Nancy—MGM (68 min.)	150	No release set for	
Time Out For Murder—20th Century-Fox (59 min.)	131	905 Vacation from Love—O'Keefe-Rice-Owen	
Under the Big Top—Monogram (63 min.)	151	906 Stablemates—Beery-Rooney	
Utah Trail, The—Grand Nat'l (59 min.)	Not Reviewed	904 Listen, Darling—Garland-Bartholomew	
Valley of the Giants—Warner Bros. (83 min.)	146		
Whirlwind Horsemen—Grand Nat'l (58m.)	Not Reviewed		
You Can't Take It With You—Columbia (127 min.)	150		

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

### Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

8207 South of Arizona—Starrett (56 min.)	July 28
8011 The Gladiator—Joe E. Brown	Aug. 15



### Monogram Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 3719 My Old Kentucky Home—Venable-Hall ....Feb. 16  
3733 The Painted Trail—Tom Keene (50 min.) ..Feb. 23  
3725 Port of Missing Girls—Allen-Carey .....Mar. 2  
3728 Code of the Rangers—Tim McCoy (56 min.)..Mar. 9  
3715 Rose of the Rio Grande—Movita .....Mar. 16  
3739 Land of Fighting Men—Randall (53 min.) ..Apr. 11  
3713 Female Fugitive—Venable-Reynolds .....Apr. 15  
3729 Two Gun Justice—Tim McCoy (57 min.) ..Apr. 30  
3740 Gun Smoke Trail—J. Randall (56 min.) ....May 8  
3709 Numbered Woman—Blane .....May 22  
3730 Phantom Ranger—Tim McCoy (53 min.) ..May 29  
3712 Marines Are Here—Travis-Oliver .....June 8  
3702 Romance of the Limberlost—Parker .....June 22  
3742 Man's Country—Jack Randall (55 min.) ...July 6  
3741 Mexicali Kid (Last Frontier)—Jack  
Randall (51 min.) (reset) .....Sept 14

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 3810 Barefoot Boy—Moran-Fain-Windsor .....Aug. 3  
3811 Under the Big Top (Circus Comes to  
Town)—Main-Nagel-LaRue .....Aug. 31  
3859 Starlight Over Texas—Tex Ritter (56 min.)..Sept. 7  
3817 Wanted by the Police—Darro-Knapp .....Sept. 21  
Mr. Wong, Detective—Boris Karloff .....Oct. 5  
Sweetheart of Sigma Chi—Carlisle .....Oct. 10  
Where the Buffalo Roams—Tex Ritter .....Oct. 12  
Gangster's Boy—Jackie Cooper .....Nov. 2

### Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 3749 Give Me a Sailor—Raye-Hope-Grable .....Aug. 19  
3750 Spawn of the North—Raft-Fonda-Lamour..Aug. 26

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 3854 Pride of the West—Wm. Boyd (55 min.)....July 8  
3801 Sing You Sinners—Crosby-MacMurray ....Sept. 2  
3855 In Old Mexico—W. Boyd-Hayes (66½m.)..Sept. 7  
3802 Campus Confessions—Grable-Henry (re.) ..Sept. 16  
3803 Sons of the Legion—O'Connor-Lee (re.) ...Sept. 23  
King of Alcatraz—Naish-Patrick .....Sept. 30  
3805 Touchdown, Army—Howard-Carlisle .....Oct. 7  
Arkansas Traveler—Burns-Parker (re.) .....Oct. 14  
Mysterious Rider—Dumbrille-Fields .....Oct. 21  
Illegal Traffic—Naish-Carlisle .....Oct. 21  
Escape from Yesterday—Farmer-Tamiroff ..Oct. 28  
Men with Wings—MacMurray .....Oct. Special

### Republic Features

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 7118 Heroes of the Hills—Three Mesq. (55m.) ..Aug. 1  
7024 Come On Leathernecks—Cromwell-Hunt ..Aug. 8  
7013 A Desperate Adventure—Novarro-Marsh ..Aug. 15  
7025 Tenth Avenue Kid—Cabot-Roberts .....Aug. 22  
7128 Durango Valley Raiders—Steele (55m.) ...Aug. 22  
7014 The Higgins Family (Home Sweet Home)  
—Gleason family .....Aug. 29  
7104 Man From Music Mountain—Autry (58m.)  
(r.) .....Sept. 12  
Prairie Moon—Gene Autry .....Oct. 3

(more to come)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 861 Pals of the Saddle—Three Mesq. (55 min.) ..Aug. 20  
851 Billy the Kid Returns—Roy Rogers (56m.) ..Sept. 4  
862 Overland Stage Raiders—Three Mes. (55m.)..Sept. 20  
Down in Arkansas—Byrd-Weaver Bros. ....Sept. 29  
The Night Hawk—Livingston-Travis .....Oct. 3

### RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 845 Breaking the Ice—Breen-Ruggles .....Aug. 26  
837 Carefree—Astaire-Rogers-Bellamy .....Sept. 2  
884 The Renegade Ranger—George O'Brien....Sept. 16

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 902 The Affairs of Annabel—Oakie-Ball .....Sept. 9  
903 Fugitives for a Night—Albertson .....Sept. 23  
901 Room Service—Marx Bros.-Miller-Ball ....Sept. 30  
904 Mr. Doodle Kicks Off—Joe Penner .....Oct. 7  
905 A Man to Remember—Ellis-Shirley .....Oct. 14  
906 The Mad Miss Manton—Stanwyck-Fonda ....Oct. 21  
907 Miracle Racket—Eilers-Miller-Bowman .....Oct. 28

### Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 907 Hold That Co-Ed—J. Barrymore-Weaver ..Sept. 16  
908 Time Out For Murder—Stuart-Whalen .....Sept. 23  
911 Straight, Place and Show—Ritz Bros. ....Sept. 30  
910 Meet the Girls—Lang-Bari-Allen .....Oct. 7  
909 Submarine Patrol—Greene-Kelly-Foster ....Oct. 14  
912 Mysterious Mr. Moto—Lorre-Maguire .....Oct. 21  
914 Always in Trouble—Withers-Rogers .....Oct. 28  
913 Suez—Power-Young-Annabella-Bromberg ..Nov. 4

### United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Blockade—Fonda-Carroll-Carrillo .....June 17  
South Riding—Best-Richardson .....July 1

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- Algiers—Boyer-Gurie-Lamarr .....Aug. 5  
Drums—Sabu-Livesey-Massey-Hobson .....Sept. 30  
There Goes My Heart—March-Bruce.....Oct. 14  
Lady and the Cowboy—Cooper-Oberon .....Nov. 1  
Made For Each Other—Lombard-Stewart .....Nov. 15  
The Young In Heart—Gaynor-Fairbanks, Jr...Postponed

### Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- A2028 Prison Break—Farrell-MacLane .....July 15  
A2008 Little Tough Guy—Wilcox-Parish .....July 22  
A2033 Letter of Introduction—Leeds-Menjou ....Aug. 5  
A2031 The Missing Guest—Kelly-Moore .....Aug. 12  
Dark Rapture—Roosevelt Exp. (re.) ....Aug. 26  
That Certain Age—Durbin-Cooper (re.) ..Oct. 7

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- A3057 Strawberry Roan—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3058 Fiddlin' Buckaroo—Maynard reissue.....Aug. 15  
A3059 King of the Arena—Maynard reissue.....Aug. 15  
A3060 Honor of the Range—Maynard reissue....Aug. 15  
A3061 Smoking Guns—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3062 Gun Justice—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3025 Freshman Year—Dunbar-Truex .....Sept. 2  
Personal Secretary—Gargan-Hodges .....Sept. 9  
A3051 Black Bandit—Bob Baker (57 min.) ....Sept. 16  
A3017 Road to Reno—Scott-Hampton .....Sept. 23  
Youth Takes a Fling—McCrea-Leeds (r.) ..Sept. 30  
Swing That Cheer—Truex-Wilcox-Moore ..Oct. 14  
A3052 Guilty Trail—Bob Baker .....Oct. 21  
Service DeLuxe—C. Bennett-Price .....Oct. 21  
The Storm—Bickford-MacLane-Grey .....Oct. 28  
The Last Express—K. Taylor- D. Kent ...Oct. 28

### Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 208 White Banners—Rains-Bainter-Cooper .....June 25  
215 Men Are Such Fools—Morris-P. Lane .....July 2  
217 Cowboy From Brooklyn—Powell-O'Brien ...July 16  
227 Mr. Chump—Davis-L. Lane-Singleton .....Aug. 6  
205 Racket Busters—Bogart-Brent .....Aug. 13  
213 Boy Meets Girl—Cagney-O'Brien .....Aug. 27

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 306 Four's a Crowd—Flynn-DeHavilland .....Sept. 3  
305 Valley of the Giants—Morris-Trevor .....Sept. 17  
The Sisters—Flynn-Davis-Louise .....Oct. 15



## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

8705	Krazy Magic—Krazy Kat (6½m.)	May 20
8860	Screen Snapshots No. 10—(9½m.)	May 27
8509	Window Shopping—Col. Rhapsody (7½m.)	June 3
8809	Thrilling Moments—W. of Sport (10m.)	June 10
8659	Community Sing No. 9—(8½m.)	June 25
8810	Fistic Fun—World of Sport (9½ min.)	July 1
8510	Poor Little Butterfly—Col. Rhap. (8 m.)	July 4
8706	Krazy's Travel Squawks—K. Kat (6½ m.)	July 4
8660	Community Sing No. 10—(9½ min.)	July 4
8861	Screen Snapshots No. 11—(10½ min.)	July 8
8758	City Slicker—Scrappys (6½ min.)	July 22
8511	Poor Elmer—Color Rhapsody (7 min.)	July 22
8862	Screen Snapshots No. 12—(9½ min.)	July 29
8811	Athletic Youth—World of Sport (9 min.)	July 29
8512	The Frog Pond—Color Rhapsody (7½m.)	Aug. 12
8812	Demons of the Deep—World of Sport (9m.)	Aug. 19
8661	Community Sing No. 11—(10½ min.)	Aug. 26
8662	Community Sing No. 12—(10½ min.)	Sept. 15

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

9501	Hollywood Graduation—Color Rhap. (7m.)	Aug. 26
9701	Gym Jams—Krazy Kat (6½ min.)	Sept. 2
9561	Early Bird—Scrappys (6½ min.)	Sept. 16
9851	Screen Snapshots No. 1—(9½ min.)	Sept. 16
9502	Animal Cracker Circus—Color Rhapsody	Sept. 23
9801	Football Giants—Sport Thrills (10½ min.)	Sept. 28
9651	Community Sing No. 1	Oct. 1
9752	Happy Birthday—Scrappys	Oct. 7
9852	Screen Snapshots No. 2	Oct. 14
9802	Ski Legs—Sport Thrills	Oct. 20
9702	Hot Dogs on Ice—Krazy Kat	Oct. 21
9503	Little Moth's Big Flame—Color Rhapsody	Oct. 25

### Columbia—Two Reels

8186	The Apache Killer—Great Adv. #6 (19m.)	Aug. 4
8187	Prowling Wolves—Great Adv. #7 (18m.)	Aug. 11
8188	The Pit—Great Adv. #8 (17m.)	Aug. 18
8189	Ambushed—Great Adv. #9 (16m.)	Aug. 25
8190	Savage Vengeance—Gt. Adv. #10 (19½m.)	Sept. 1
8191	Burning Waters—Great Adv. #11 (15½m.)	Sept. 8
8192	Desperation—Great Adv. #12 (17½m.)	Sept. 15
8193	Phantom Bullets—Great Adv. #13	Sept. 22
8194	The Lure—Great Adv. #14	Sept. 29
8195	Trails End—Great Adv. #15	Oct. 6

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

9421	Many Sappy Returns—All star (17½m.)	Aug. 19
9401	Violent Is the Word for Curly—Stooge (18 min.)	Sept. 2
9422	Sue My Lawyer—All star (17 min.)	Sept. 16
9423	Not Guilty Enough—All star	Sept. 30
9402	Mutts to You—Stooge (18 min.)	Oct. 14
9424	Nightshirt Bandit—All star (17 min.)	Oct. 28

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

W-686	What a Lion—Captain cart. (9 min.)	July 16
T-662	Paris on Parade—Traveltalks (9 min.)	July 23
F-757	The Courtship of the Newt—Bcnchley (8 min.)	July 23
S-712	Follow the Arrow—Pete Smith (10 min.)	July 30
H-728	The Bravest of the Brave—Hist. Myst. (11 min.)	Aug. 6
W-687	The Pygmy Hunt—Captain cart. (8 min.)	Aug. 6
C-741	The Little Ranger—Our Gang c. (11m.)	Aug. 6
S-713	Fisticuffs—Pete Smith (9 min.)	Aug. 27
F-758	How to Read—Bcnchley (9 min.)	Aug. 27
C-742	Party Fever—Our Gang (10 min.)	Aug. 27
H-729	The Man on the Rock—Hist. Mys. (11m.)	Sept. 3
W-688	Old Smokey—Captain cartoon (7 min.)	Sept. 3
S-714	Football Thrills—Pete Smith (10 min.)	Sept. 10
W-689	Buried Treasure—Captain cart. (8 min.)	Sept. 17
H-730	Nostradamus—Hist. Mysteries	Sept. 24
W-690	The Winning Ticket—Captain cartoon	Oct. 1

(more to come)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

M-871	The City of Little Men—Miniat. (11m.)	Aug. 20
M-872	Streamlined Swing—Miniatures (9 min.)	Sept. 10
T-851	Cairo, City of Contrast—Travel. (9 min.)	Sept. 10
T-852	Madeira, Isle of Romance—Traveltalk	Oct. 1

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

R-606	It's in the Stars—Musical (19 min.)	July 30
P-615	They're Always Caught—Crime Doesn't Pay (22 min.)	Sept. 3
P-616	Think It Over—Crime Doesn't Pay	Sept. 24

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Paramount—One Reel

V8-1	Taunhaeuser—Paraphratic (12 min.)	Aug. 12
T8-1	Pudgy, The Watchman—Betty Boop (7m.)	Aug. 12
K8-1	Guatemala—Color Cruises (9 min.)	Aug. 12
E8-1	Bulldozing the Bull—Popeye (6 min.)	Aug. 19
C8-1	All's Fair at the Fair—Col. Cl. (8 min.)	Aug. 26
A8-2	Lights! Action! Lucas!—Headliner (10m.)	Sept. 2
P8-2	Paramount Pictorial No. 2—(9 min.)	Sept. 2
R8-2	Hunting Thrills—Spotlight (9½ min.)	Sept. 2
J8-1	Popular Science No. 1—(10½ min.)	Sept. 2
V8-2	Mildewed Melodramas—Para. (10½ min.)	Sept. 9
T8-2	Buzzy Boop at the Concert—Boop (7 min.)	Sept. 16
E8-2	Mutiny Ain't Nice—Popeye (7 min.)	Sept. 23
R8-3	Racing Pigeons—Spotlight (9 min.)	Sept. 30
A8-3	Busse Rhythm—Headliner (10½ min.)	Oct. 7
P8-3	Paramount Pictorial No. 3—(9 min.)	Oct. 7
L8-2	Unusual Occupations No. 2	Oct. 7
K8-2	Mexico—Color Cruises	Oct. 7
V8-3	Rube Goldberg's Travelgab—Para. (8½m.)	Oct. 14

### RKO—One Reel

84118	Mickey's Parrot—Disney cart. (8 min.)	Sept. 9
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(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

94201	Under a Gypsy Moon—Nu Atlas (10 min.)	Sept. 2
94301	Fisherman's Paradise—Sport. (9 min.)	Sept. 9
94601	Submarine Circus—Reelism (10 min.)	Sept. 16
94101	Brave Little Tailor—Disney (9 min.)	Sept. 23
94202	Styles and Smiles—Nu Atlas (11 min.)	Sept. 30
94302	Not Yet Titled—Sportscope	Oct. 7
94102	Farmyard Symphony—Disney (8 min.)	Oct. 14
94203	Talent Auction—Nu Atlas (10 min.)	Oct. 28
94103	Donald's Golf Game—Disney (8 min.)	Nov. 4

### RKO—Two Reels

83113	March of Time—(19 min.)	Aug. 5
83303	Hunting Trouble—Jed Prouty (16 min.)	Aug. 12

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

93101	March of Time—(21 min.)	Sept. 2
93501	A Western Welcome—R. Whitley (18m.)	Sept. 9
93701	Stage Fright—Leon Errol (18 min.)	Sept. 23
93102	March of Time	Sept. 30
93401	Beaux and Errors—Kennedy (18 min.)	Oct. 7
93601	Sea Melody—Ted Fio Rito (19 min.)	Oct. 21
93103	March of Time	Oct. 28

### Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

#### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

9101	Golden California—Rd. to Rom. (10½m.)	Aug. 5
9501	Chris Columbo—Terry-Toon (6½ min.)	Aug. 12
9201	Recording Modern Science—Cameraman (10 min.)	Aug. 19
9521	String Bean Jack—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Aug. 26
9401	What Every Boy Should Know—Lehr (10 min.)	Sept. 2
9502	The Goose Flies High—T. Toon (6½m.)	Sept. 9
9601	Fashion Forecasts—Fashions	Sept. 16
9503	Wolf's Side of the Story—T. Toon (6½m.)	Sept. 23
9301	Thoroughbreds—Sports	Sept. 30
9522	The Glass Slipper—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Oct. 7
9102	Land of Contentment—L. Thomas (10½m.)	Oct. 14
9504	The New Comer—Terry-Toon	Oct. 21
9202	Filming Big Thrills—Adv. Camcra (9½m.)	Oct. 28



## Universal—One Reel

- A2292 Queen's Kittens—Oswald cart. (7½ min.) .Aug. 8  
A2293 The Big Cat and The Little Mouse—  
Oswald cartoon (7 min.) .....Aug. 15  
A2294 Ghost Town Frolics—Oswald cart. (7m.) .Sept. 5  
A2295 Pixie Land—Oswald cart. (7 min.) .....Sept. 12  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

## Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- A3351 Going Places with Thomas #53—(9m.)...Aug. 22  
A3364 Stranger Than Fiction #53—(9m.).....Aug. 29  
A3352 Going Places with Thomas #54—(9½m.) .Sept. 12  
A3365 Stranger Than Fiction #54—(9m.) .....Sept. 19  
A3353 Going Places with Thomas #55—(9m.)...Oct. 3  
A3241 The Cat and the Bell—Lantz cart. (7m.)...Oct. 3  
A3366 Stranger Than Fiction #55—(9½m.) .....Oct. 10

## Universal—Two Reels

- A3590 In the Claws of the Cougar—Flaming  
Frontiers #10 (19½ min.) .....Sept. 6  
A3221 Rhythm Cafe—Mentone (20 min.) .....Sept. 7  
A3591 The Half Breed's Revenge—Flaming  
#11 (20½ min.) .....Sept. 13  
A3592 The Indians Are Coming—Flaming  
#12 (19 min.) .....Sept. 20  
A3593 The Fatal Plunge—Flaming #13 (20m.)...Sept. 27  
A3222 Beauty Shoppe—Mentone (19½ min.) ...Sept. 28  
A3594 Dynamite—Flaming #14 (20m.) .....Oct. 4  
A3595 A Duel to Death—Flaming #15 (17½m.)...Oct. 11  
A3223 Side Show Fakir—Mentone .....Oct. 12  
A3681 Millions For Defense—Red Barry No. 1  
(19½ min.) .....Oct. 25

## Vitaphone—One Reel

- 3511 Mechanix Illustrated—Color-Tour (10m.) .July 23  
3417 Cinderella Meets a Fella—Mer. Mel. (8m.) .July 23  
3312 Night Intruder—True Adv. (11m.) .....July 23  
3717 Saturday Night Swing Club—Mel. M. (11m.) July 30  
3615 Porky and Daffy—Looney Tunes (7m.) ....Aug. 6  
3912 Swing Cat's Jamboree—Vit. Var. (8m.) ....Aug. 6  
3812 Hollywood-Sculling-Furs—Pic. Rev. (10m.) Aug. 13  
3418 The Major Lied Till Dawn—Mer. M. (7m.) Aug. 13  
3313 Trapped Underground—True Adv. (14m.)...Aug. 20  
3718 Clyde McCoy and Orch.—Mel. Mas. (11m.) .Aug. 20  
3616 Wholly Smoke—Looney Tunes (7 min.) ...Aug. 27  
3419 A Lad in Bagdad—Mer. Mel. (7½ min.) ...Aug. 27  
3513 The Hermit Kingdom—Color-Tour (10m.) .Aug. 27  
3420 Cracked Ice—Mer. Melodies (8 min.) .....Sept. 10  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

## Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 4701 Larry Clinton—Mel. Masters (10 min.) ....Sept. 3  
4901 The Great Library Misery—Vit. Var. (11m.) .Sept. 10  
4601 Miracles of Sport—Color Par. (9 min.) ....Sept. 10  
4301 Identified—True Adventures (12 min.) ....Sept. 17  
4501 A Feud There Was—Mer. Mel. (8 min.) ....Sept. 24  
4801 Porky in Wackyland—L. Tunes (7 min.) ...Sept. 24  
4602 China Today—Color Parade (11 min.) .....Oct. 1  
4401 Pow Wow—Technicolor Special (10 min.) ..Oct. 1  
4702 Ray Kinney and His Hawaiians—  
Melody Masters (10 min.) .....Oct. 1  
4502 Little Pancho Vanilla—Mer. Mel. (7 min.) ...Oct. 8  
4802 Porky's Naughty Nephew—L. Tun. (7½m.) .Oct. 15  
4303 Not Yet Titled—True Adventures .....Oct. 15  
4902 Table Manners—Vit. Var. (10 min.) .....Oct. 15  
4703 Jimmy Dorsey and Orch.—Mel. Mast. (9m.) .Oct. 22  
4503 Johnny Smith and Poker Huntas—Mer. Mel. .Oct. 22

## Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 3030 There Goes the Bride—Gayeties (22 min.) ..Aug. 27  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

## Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 4009 Zero Girl—Bway. Brev. (20 min.) .....Sept. 3  
4001 Campus Cinderella—Tech. Prod. (18m.) ...Sept. 17  
4010 Murder with Reservations—B. Brev. (21m.) .Sept. 24  
4011 Toyland Casino—Bway. Brevities .....Oct. 8  
4012 Two Shadows—Bway. Brevities .....Oct. 22  
4013 The Knight Is Young—Bway. Brev. ....Oct. 29  
4014 Hats and Dogs—Bway. Brevities .....Nov. 12

## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

### Universal

- 707 Wednesday ..Oct. 5  
708 Saturday ....Oct. 8  
709 Wednesday ..Oct. 12  
710 Saturday ....Oct. 15  
711 Wednesday ..Oct. 19  
712 Saturday ....Oct. 22  
713 Wednesday ..Oct. 26  
714 Saturday ....Oct. 29  
715 Wednesday ..Nov. 2  
716 Saturday ....Nov. 5  
717 Wednesday ..Nov. 9  
718 Saturday ....Nov. 12

### Fox Movietone

- 7 Wednesday ...Oct. 5  
8 Saturday .....Oct. 8  
9 Wednesday ...Oct. 12  
10 Saturday .....Oct. 15  
11 Wednesday ...Oct. 19  
12 Saturday .....Oct. 22  
13 Wednesday ...Oct. 26  
14 Saturday .....Oct. 29  
15 Wednesday ...Nov. 2  
16 Saturday .....Nov. 5  
17 Wednesday ...Nov. 9  
18 Saturday .....Nov. 12

### Paramount News

- 18 Wednesday ...Oct. 5  
19 Saturday .....Oct. 8  
20 Wednesday ...Oct. 12  
21 Saturday .....Oct. 15  
22 Wednesday ...Oct. 19  
23 Saturday .....Oct. 22  
24 Wednesday ...Oct. 26  
25 Saturday .....Oct. 29  
26 Wednesday ...Nov. 2  
27 Saturday .....Nov. 5  
28 Wednesday ...Nov. 9  
29 Saturday .....Nov. 12

### Metrotone News

- 205 Wednesday ..Oct. 5  
206 Saturday ....Oct. 8  
207 Wednesday ..Oct. 12  
208 Saturday ....Oct. 15  
209 Wednesday ..Oct. 19  
210 Saturday ....Oct. 22  
211 Wednesday ..Oct. 26  
212 Saturday ....Oct. 29  
213 Wednesday ..Nov. 2  
214 Saturday ....Nov. 5  
215 Wednesday ..Nov. 9  
216 Saturday ....Nov. 12

### Pathe News

- 95222 Wed. (E.) .Oct. 5  
95123 Sat. (O.) .Oct. 8  
95224 Wed. (E.) .Oct. 12  
95125 Sat. (O.) .Oct. 15  
95226 Wed. (E.) .Oct. 19  
95127 Sat. (O.) .Oct. 22  
95228 Wed. (E.) .Oct. 26  
95129 Sat. (O.) .Oct. 29  
95230 Wed. (E.) .Nov. 2  
95131 Sat. (O.) .Nov. 5  
95232 Wed. (E.) .Nov. 9  
95133 Sat. (O.) .Nov. 12



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1938

No. 41

### IS THE PHILADELPHIA EXHIBITOR LEADERSHIP DIVIDED?

Under the heading, "Reminder and a Warning!" *Contact*, the house organ of the Philadelphia territory exhibitors, accuses "certain exchanges" of taking advantage of the differences between "certain leading exhibitors" "to drive home very sharp bargains." "Promises previously made to adjust grievances," says *Contact*, "are being ignored or repudiated. . . . Clearance, long established, is being changed without consulting the complaining exhibitor."

*Contact* warns the distributors that these tactics are embittering the exhibitors, driving them all into the ranks of those who believe that relief can come only through the Government at Washington. It also states that the major companies' professed desire to establish a conciliation system is not supported by any change in the attitude of the distributor employees toward the independent exhibitors.

*Contact*, by implication, leads the readers to understand that division in the exhibitor leadership of that territory has prompted the distributor employees to alter their attitude towards the independent exhibitors.

If what *Contact* implies is true, then the cause of the division in the leadership should be removed, for its continuance works harmfully upon the interests of the members of the rank and file. Certainly the leaders of that zone are big enough to make sacrifices for the good of the organization. To refrain from making sacrifices will denote either stubbornness, which is bad, or selfishness, which is worse.

Philadelphia has done some mighty big things in days gone by, some of them not very long ago. Is that strength going to be dissipated for some unworthy motive? If he who is at fault should refuse to consider the interests of the membership, which are, according to what *Contact* writes, suffering, then this paper appeals to Mr. Abram F. Myers to step into the breach so as to bring harmony out of strife, for even though that organization is not a member of Allied States its aggressiveness, coupled with the cooperative spirit its leaders showed toward Allied in a recent campaign, has been a source of help to Allied States.

Perhaps some of the cool heads of the Philadelphia zone will invite Mr. Myers to take steps to make the territory an Allied unit.

### ABOUT TIME THAT IT HAPPENED

According to a Hollywood dispatch that was printed in a recent issue of *Motion Picture Daily*, the producers have made up their minds to fight the industry's radio critics by means of the radio itself, the program to be called, "Cavalcade of Hollywood." It will be a national network, but will have no commercial sponsor.

A meeting by many industry leaders took place at the home of W. S. Van Dyke, and the idea was endorsed unanimously.

It is about time that the industry took steps to offset the gabbing of some radio critics, who employ sensational language in the traducing of the motion picture industry so that they might maintain, and even increase, the number of their listeners.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that one of the other matters that this committee should take up should be to induce the studio heads of some companies to refrain from engaging

such critics to act in feature pictures. The object of engaging such critics is, no doubt, to induce them to leave the employing company alone. It is not the best method of silencing such critics; as a matter of fact, it is the worst method, for it encourages some of the other critics to continue their blasts, and even to intensify them, with the hope perhaps that some "windfall" will come their way.

### THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)

#### Selling of Pictures Tough This Season

Reports from various sections of the country indicate that this year's selling is considerably slower and tougher, as far as the exchanges are concerned, than the previous year.

For this state of affairs there are several excellent reasons namely, (1) the distributors, for the most part, have failed to take into consideration that general movie business along with every other form of business is subnormal and the outlook is not particularly bright; (2) the principle of demanding increased rentals each year is so thoroughly engrained that from force of habit salesmen have received their same annual instructions; (3) the distributors have devised no sales argument such as last year's "we are putting so many more millions into production," in order for them to win the sympathy of the exhibitors; (4) the distributors have completely overlooked the fact that the government has filed an anti-trust suit against them and is openly inviting complaints from exhibitors further to strengthen their case.

Film rentals for the most part seem to be based on what the traffic will bear, and frequently much more than it will bear. There can be no argument to the fact that movie patronage is off, severely off. But so is that of every other business. The movie contest and unusually strong pictures released in rapid succession have given it a shot in the arm. Every exhibitor hopes that the hypo will be of a lasting nature. However, you can't afford to sign stiff contracts on mere hopes and expect to stay in business for long. An equitable solution would seem to be sliding contracts with liberal split figures.

While the memory of the writer extends back comparatively few years the annual cry of "we can't sell a contract which doesn't provide for an increase over last year" is becoming all too familiar and hackneyed. We can readily appreciate that sales managers must justify their healthy salaries and that this can best be done by showing stiffer prices on each succeeding contract. But we fail to see why exhibitors should be made the goats in this drive. Product should be sold on merit and merit alone.

At the beginning of the 1938 season salesmen won the exhibitor's sympathy with fabulous tales of how much money was going into bigger and better productions. When the recession hit studios they started to operate on a business basis and cut their budgets according to conditions. The economies put into effect were found so practical that they were carried over to the 1938-39 product. But unlike their insistence that exhibitors share the burden of increased picture budgets, the distributors are unwilling to have them share in the decreased budgets.

In spite of the fact that the government is training its guns on the picture industry, the distributors are going their merry way of playing straight into the government's

(Continued on last page)



**"Straight, Place and Show" with the Ritz Brothers, Phyllis Brooks and Richard Arlen**  
(20th Century-Fox, September 30; time, 67 min.)

A fair comedy. The Ritz Brothers are not at their best here, owing to the weakness of the material given them. With the exception of one extremely comical scene, in which Harry Ritz wrestles with a powerful opponent, they are forced to resort to making faces in an attempt to arouse laughter. The serious end of the story is slightly tiresome and unbelievable; in addition, the characters, by reason of their actions, fail to win one's sympathy. A few musical numbers are well rendered by Ethel Merman; but somehow one feels they are out of place and were inserted just to liven things up a bit. The Ritz Brothers will need stronger material than this in pictures where they are starred:—

Arlen, engaged to wealthy Miss Brooks, is annoyed at the fact that she keeps putting off their wedding date; she was busy training a horse for racing. He makes an agreement with her that, should her horse fail to make a good showing in a few races, she would turn the horse over to him to do with as he pleased. He wins the bet; he gives the horse to the Ritz Brothers, strangers to him, on condition that they would not sell the horse. Excited at the idea of owning a race horse, they try to think of means of getting enough money together to enter it in races. When Miss Brooks learns what Arlen had done, she is furious and sets out in search of the new owners. She finds them and pleads to be permitted to stay with them in order to train the horse; they agree. On the day of the big race, Arlen, sorry for what he had done, obtains permission from the Ritz Brothers to ride the horse; overhearing three riders plotting to ruin Arlen's chances of winning, the Ritz Brothers knock them out and take their places in the race. The horses they ride are so good that for a time it looks as if they would win; but they manage to get off the track in time. Arlen wins; the Ritz Brothers become wealthy, and Miss Brooks and Arlen are reconciled.

The plot was based on the play by Damon Runyon and Irving Caesar; M. M. Musselman and Allen Rivkin wrote the screen play; David Butler directed it, and David Hempstead produced it. In the cast are George Barbier, Sidney Blackmer, Will Stanton, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Broadway Musketeers" with Margaret Lindsay, Ann Sheridan and John Litel**  
(First National, October 8; time, 62½ min.)

An unpleasant program drama. Although no mention is made on the screen credits as to the original story source, this seems to be a remake of "Three On a Match," produced by First National in 1932, which was a rather sordid and depressing entertainment. A few changes were made in this version, but not enough to remove the unpleasantness. One feels little sympathy for the characters, particularly for the heroine, who deserts her child and devoted husband; the fact that in the end she suddenly shows love for her child, even to the point of sacrificing her own life, does not change one's feeling towards her:—

Although Margaret Lindsay was married to wealthy John Litel, who loved her, and had a lovely child (Janet Chapman), she was restless and longed for excitement. During her husband's absence on a business trip, she goes to a night club with a friend (Marie Wilson) at which another friend (Ann Sheridan) was a singer. Miss Lindsay flirts with Richard Bond, a gambler; thereafter they see each other often. Eventually she divorces Litel and marries Bond, who gambles away her settlement money in a short time. Litel and Miss Sheridan fall in love with each other and marry; she is devoted to Janet. Miss Lindsay asks Miss Sheridan for money; spying Janet, she pleads with Miss Sheridan to give her to her for the afternoon; she takes the child to her apartment. Bond arrives, excited; he had given a bad check to Dick Purcell, a gambler-racketeer, and was planning to run away. Purcell's henchmen arrive and kill Bond; they take Miss Lindsay and Janet to a hide-out; their plan was to kill Miss Lindsay and demand ransom for Janet. But Miss Lindsay, realizing that they might kill the child, jumps out of the window so that the police might find her and rescue the child. She dies; but her plan works—Janet is saved and the crooks are arrested.

Don Ryan and Kenneth Gamet wrote the screen play; John Farrow directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Anthony Averill and Dewey Robinson.

Unsuitable for children or adolescents. Class B.

**"The Night Hawk" with Robert Livingston, June Travis and Robert Armstrong**  
(Republic, October 3; time, 63 min.)

A fast-moving and, for the most part, exciting program melodrama. In spite of the fact that the story is far-fetched, one's interest is held to the very end. The hero, a newspaper reporter, is a likeable character, who wins the spectator's admiration by his display of courage in the face of danger. The closing scenes, where he is held captive by a gang of smugglers who planned to kill him, are thrilling and hold one in tense suspense. There is comedy and romance, both well developed:—

Robert Livingston, newspaper reporter, is sent to an incoming ocean liner to get two stories—one about an iron lung that had been ordered by a racketeer (Robert Armstrong) for his sick brother, and the other about a Federal Agent, who had collected data with reference to smugglers. Since the Federal Agent was a friend of Livingston's, the reporter is able to see him first. Learning that the ship had been quarantined because of small-pox, Livingston and his assistant, a young Chinese photographer, hide in the iron lung, which was being taken off the ship. The machine is hijacked by Ben Welden, Armstrong's enemy; but Livingston manages to outwit the crooks and get the machine to the hospital, for which Armstrong is grateful. Livingston is shocked to hear that the Federal Agent had been killed. He suspects Armstrong as being the brains behind the racket and decides to go after him. But in doing so his life is endangered. In the end, he gets the information he needs, and helps round up the gang. Armstrong sacrifices his own life in saving Livingston from the other gangsters. Livingston and June Travis, the publisher's daughter, who had helped him in his work, decide to marry.

Earl Felton wrote the original screen play; Sidney Salchow directed it, and Herman Schlom produced it. In the cast are Lucien Littlefield and Joseph Downing.

The murders make it unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"If I Were King" with Ronald Colman, Basil Rathbone and Frances Dee**  
(Paramount, November 11; time, 100 min.)

Very good; the production is lavish and the performances are excellent. Produced three times before, the last time in 1930, under the title "The Vagabond King," this still offers the type of entertainment that the masses should go for—adventure, comedy, thrills, and romance; unlike the last version, however, this has no music. There is exciting action throughout; particularly thrilling are the closing scenes in which the hero leads his men in a battle against enemy invaders. The action takes place in France:—

Eager to find out the names of those who were plotting against him with the Burgundians, traitors who had blockaded Paris, King Louis XI (Basil Rathbone), disguised, goes to a tavern where he knew the plotters would meet. There he finds Francois Villon (Ronald Colman) and his gang of ruffians, who were making merry with food and wine they had stolen from the King's storehouse. The King becomes interested in what Villon had to say about what he would do if he were King. Soldiers, headed by the Grand Constable (John Miljan), who had followed Villon to the tavern, enter and in a battle Villon kills the Grand Constable; the King then reveals his identity and orders the arrest of every one at the tavern. Having found out that the Grand Constable had been the chief plotter, the King is grateful to Villon for killing him; but he feels he should be punished. But first, for his own amusement, he appoints Villon Grand Constable, with full powers to do as he pleased; Villon naturally releases all his friends. Villon suggests that the King's army attack the Burgundians, but the generals disapprove of such tactics; the King tells Villon to prepare for his own hanging. At the suggestion of Lady Katherine DeVaucelles (Frances Dee), with whom he had fallen in love, Villon decides to open the King's storehouses to the hungry populace; left without food, the King is compelled to issue orders for his men to fight. Through Villon's bravery, the enemy is routed. The King pardons him and permits him to leave the country; Lady Katherine follows Villon.

The plot was adapted from the play by Justin H. McCarthy; Preston Sturgis wrote the screen play, Frank Lloyd directed and produced it, with Lou Smith as associate producer. In the cast are Ellen Drew, Alma Lloyd, Colin Tapley, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### "Youth Takes a Fling" with Joel McCrea and Andrea Leeds

(Universal, September 30; time, 77 min.)

An entertaining romantic comedy: Although it lacks fast action, it holds one's attention well because of its human appeal. The story is simple but charming, and the characters are of the down-to-earth type that the masses can sympathize with. Nothing exciting happens; nevertheless, in its simple way, it is the type of entertainment that leaves the spectator satisfied. The performances are excellent:—

Andrea Leeds, who worked in a department store, had romantic dreams about the man she would fall in love with. The moment she sees Joel McCrea, who worked in the shipping department, she knows that he was the man for her. But McCrea could think of nothing but the sea—he intended to sign up on a boat and sail around the world. With the help of her two friends, Dorothea Kent and Frank Jenks, she manages to get McCrea to go out with her and to have dinner at her apartment; but all he talks about is the sea. Annoyed when Jenks teases him about Miss Leeds, McCrea finally signs up with a ship; he tells Miss Leeds about it at a week-end picnic the company had arranged. Heartbroken, Miss Leeds dresses up in an expensive wedding gown she was supposed to deliver to a customer the following morning. She wanders outdoors; McCrea sees her and talks to her. Suddenly there is a downpour and the dress is ruined. She tearfully blames McCrea for all her troubles: Feeling that he was responsible, McCrea tries to help her. By doing this he is delayed and cannot make his ship. Miss Leeds wanders down to the dock, thinking that McCrea had already sailed, when she notices him in a launch nearby; he was arguing with the Captain to rush him to his ship. Miss Leeds gets in, just as the launch starts moving; but they cannot catch up to the boat. McCrea is thankful, for he had become seasick and wanted to get back on land. He and Miss Leeds finally marry.

Myles Connolly and Tom Reed wrote the screen play; Archie Mayo directed it, and Joe Pasternak produced it. In the cast are Virginia Grey, Grant Mitchell, Isabel Jeans, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Always in Trouble" with Jane Withers

(20th Century-Fox, October 28; time, 69 min.)

A good program comedy; although the story is far-fetched, the action is fast and amusing. The Withers fans should enjoy this, for Jane makes the most of every situation, arousing hearty laughter by the tricks she plays. She acts with ease, as usual, both in the sentimental and comedy scenes, and displays new talents. Eddie Collins is a good partner for her; together they turn somewhat silly material into good comedy situations. In the closing scenes, the action borders on slapstick but is extremely comical. The romance is pleasant; it has its ups and downs due to Jane's interference:—

Jane feels sorry for her father (Andrew Tombes), whose oil fields had made him a millionaire overnight; her mother (Nana Bryant) and sister (Jean Rogers) wanted to break into society and refused to permit Tombes to work. Jane manages to get a letter out to Tombes' New York office, requesting that papers with reference to an important merger be sent to him. Kellard, a clerk in the New York office, arrives with the papers, only to find Tombes in an intoxicated condition and unable to attend to business. Jane induces Kellard to take the family away on a yachting trip, so as to give Tombes an opportunity, when he awakened, to read the papers without interference. Once aboard the yacht, she leads her mother, sister, and uncle (Collins), to believe that they were being kidnapped. Kellard accidentally crashes the yacht and they land on an island, where they find a palatial house. They become involved with smugglers, who were making their headquarters there; the smugglers decide to hold them for ransom, but Jane, through a ruse, scares them away. Eventually they are rescued. Jane is overjoyed when she realizes that the trip had cured her mother and sister of their snobbishness, and that her sister had fallen in love with Kellard.

Albert Treyner and Jeff Moffitt wrote the story, and Karen DeWolf and Robert Chapin, the screen play; Joseph Santley directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are Joan Woodbury, Arthur Treacher, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Girls School" with Anne Shirley; Nan Grey and Ralph Bellamy

(Columbia, September 30; time, 72 min.)

Good entertainment. The story centers around a fashionable finishing school for girls; it gives a realistic picture of life at the school, and, in a humorous and human way, shows how young girls in their teens act. One of the most delightful situations is that in which the girls are shown preparing for their school dance, to which their boy friends had been invited; their excitement and comments should make spectators chuckle. There is also a serious side to the story; this involves Anne Shirley, who, being poor, felt that she was an outsider. Two adult romances are worked into the plot in an interesting way:—

Having been admitted to the fashionable finishing school she was attending on a scholarship, Miss Shirley is not permitted to forget that she was poor; among her many duties she is given the unpleasant task of being monitor and reporting on the girls. In line with her duty, she is compelled to report that she had seen Nan Grey, the wealthiest and most popular student, sneak in early one morning, which meant that she had been out all night. All the girls, and Miss Grey in particular, hate Miss Shirley. The head of the school sends for Miss Grey's parents. Knowing that they were separated, Miss Shirley wants to save Miss Grey the humiliation of having the other girls find out about it. She rushes to the gate to meet Miss Grey's father (Pierre Watkin) and in a subtle way, suggests that he wait for his wife so that they might both enter together. Miss Grey is overjoyed at seeing her parents together; she tells them that she had been out with the boy she loved, and that she intended to marry him. Watkin urges his daughter to become friends with Miss Shirley, but she refuses. At the dance, Miss Grey accuses Miss Shirley of having stolen her flowers; she did not know that her father had sent the same kind of flowers to Miss Shirley. Miss Shirley decides to leave the school the next day. Miss Grey, who was ready to elope, finds her flowers and, realizing what a terrible mistake she had made, postpones her elopement to help Miss Shirley. She rushes to her for forgiveness; both girls are happy in their newly acquired friendship.

Tess Slesinger wrote the story, and she and Richard Sherman, the screen play; John Brahm directed it, and Sam Marx produced it. In the cast are Dorothy Moore, Gloria Holden, Noah Beery, Jr., and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Dark Rapture"

(Universal, August 26; time, 79½ min.)

This is an extremely interesting travelogue. Photographed in the Belgian Congo by the Denis-Roosevelt Expedition; it is outstanding not only for the novelty of its subject matter but for the excellent photography and interesting commentary.

One sees tribal customs and ceremonies that have not been shown before. For instance, according to the rules of one of the tribes, young boys, upon reaching the age of eight years, are compelled to show their courage so that they may be regarded as men worthy of the tribe. They are put through all kinds of torture and exposed to hardships that would try the patience of older men; but these boys go through it all without whimpering or complaining.

The most exciting scenes are those showing the pygmies, who were afraid of water and could not swim, building a bridge. Their ingenuity in planning and completing their work is remarkable.

In another unusual scene, the courage of the native is again displayed when he is shown capturing and training a wild elephant.

In the mountain country, the Expedition discovered a race of so-called giants, men who measured over seven feet in height. Here again one is in for a surprise, for these tall people are entirely different from the other tribes; they have dignity, grace, and good looks, and carry themselves like kings.

With the exception of one scene, the picture should hold one's attention well. The scene referred to is that in which the natives are shown having a feast over the carcass of an elephant; this may sicken sensitive persons.

Armand Denis directed the picture, and he and Leila Roosevelt produced it.

Suitability, Class A.



hands. While we are not so naive as to believe that the anti-trust suit would completely wreck the distribution system, we certainly expected sales policies to be liberalized so that the producers and distributors could face the court with more or less clean hands for the coming year and not give the government additional ammunition.

To those exhibitors who have resisted the outrageous sales policies of most of the majors, we take off our hat. It is a lot better to break even on an inferior picture than to work like a horse and turn over all the receipts to the exchange.

\* \* \*

### Selling Advertising on the Screen

During the depression exhibitors had to resort to many things such as bank nights, games, giveaways, etc., in order to remain in business. Some even went into the advertising business and sold their screens for a mess of porridge.

In the case of screen advertising it actually put money in the bank but, at the same time, it also kept many patrons out of the theatre. It has always been the contention of the writer that a theatre manager is selling entertainment, and anything that does not come under the head of entertainment has no business in the theatre.

We shall not go into a discussion of how unfair and disgusting it is to take a patron's money with the promise of giving him several hours of entertainment and then ring some advertising in on him.

Heretofore commercial film companies were the sole distributors of screen advertising. Within the past year advertising agencies discovered what a rich field they were passing up by neglecting the theatres.

Soon exhibitors will be flooded with requests to run advertising reels. Some will make very enticing offers, others will want their reels run for nothing because they possess some slight educational value and would save you the price of a short subject.

To any and all requests for screen advertising, regardless of the remuneration, we can offer but one solution—keep your screen free of advertising unless it is a civic or community proposition.

## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 5

### United Artists

"Blockade," with Madeleine Carroll and Henry Fonda, produced by Walter Wanger and directed by William Dieterle, from a screen play by John Howard Lawson: Good-Fair.

"South Riding," with Edna Best and Ralph Richardson, produced by Alexander Korda and directed by Victor Saville, from a screen play by Ian Dalrymple: Poor.

Twenty-three pictures have been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 4; Excellent-Good, 2; Excellent-Fair, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 3; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 2.

Twenty pictures were released during the 1936-37 season; they were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good, 6; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 3; Poor, 1.

### Universal

"The Devil's Party," with Victor McLaglen, William Gargan, Paul Kelly and Beatrice Roberts, produced by Edmund Grainger and directed by Ray McCarey, from a screen play by Roy Chanslor: Good-Fair.

"Wives Under Suspicion," with Warren William and Gail Patrick, produced by Edmund Grainger and directed by James Whale, from a screen play by Myles Connolly: Good-Fair.

"Western Trails," with Bob Baker and Marjorie Reynolds, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by George Wagner, from a screen play by Norton S. Parker: Fair-Poor.

"Outlaw Express," with Bob Baker and Cecilia Callego, produced by Paul Malvern and directed by George Wagner, from a screen play by Norton S. Parker: Fair-Poor.

"Young Fugitives," with Harry Davenport, Dorothea Kent and Robert Wilcox, produced by Barney A. Sarecky and directed by John Rawlins, from a screen play by Ben G. Kohn and Charles Grayson: Fair-Poor.

"Danger on the Air," with Donald Woods and Nan Grey, produced by Irving Starr and directed by Otis Garrett, from a screen play by Betty Laidlaw and Robert Lively: Fair-Poor.

"Rage of Paris," with Danielle Darrieux and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., produced by B. G. DeSylva and directed by Henry Koster, from a screen play by Bruce Manning and Felix Jackson: Very Good-Good.

"Prison Break," with Barton MacLane and Glenda Farrell, produced by Trem Carr and directed by Arthur Lubin, from a screen play by Norton S. Parker and Dorothy Reid: Fair.

"Little Tough Guy," with "The Dead End" Boys, Robert Wilcox and Helen Parrish, produced by Ken Goldsmith and directed by Harold Young, from a screen play by Brenda Weisberg and Gilson Brown: Very Good-Fair.

"Letter of Introduction," with Andrea Leeds, Adolphe Menjou, Edgar Bergen and George Murphy, produced and directed by John M. Stahl, from a screen play by Sheridan Gibney and Leonard Spigelgass: Very Good-Good.

Forty-eight pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings (including Westerns) from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Fair, 1; Good-Fair, 7; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 15; Fair-Poor, 18; Poor, 1.

Thirty-three pictures were released during the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns; they were rated as follows:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 13; Fair-Poor, 12.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933, OF HARRISON'S REPORTS, published Weekly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1938.

State of New York.

County of New York.

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared P. S. Harrison, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the HARRISON'S REPORTS and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager, are:  
Publisher, *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.  
Editor, *P. S. Harrison*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.  
Managing Editor, *None*.  
Business Manager, *Sylvia Miller*.

2. That the owner is: *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

*P. S. Harrison*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent, or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: *None*.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the name of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustees or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of bona fide owners; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation, has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) SYLVIA MILLER,  
(Business Manager).

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of September, 1938.

LILLIAN SILVER,  
(My commission expires March 30, 1940.)



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1938

No. 42

### WHAT A FUNNY WORLD THIS IS!

On the editorial page of the September 17 issue of *Box Office*, Red Kann reproduces a letter from Ed. Kuykendall, president of Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America, which is a favorable comment on an editorial Mr. Kann printed in the September 3 issue.

Ed. calls Red's attention to the fact that he has been the foremost advocate of the 20% cancellation proposal.

In his letter, he says partly the following:

"It appears that the average small town, with one or two theatres, has playing time for slightly over 300 feature pictures per year. The single theatre town has about two two-day and three single-day runs per week, with one double-feature program, which uses 312 features per year. The larger two-theatre towns have longer runs, and other variations in the theatre policies work out about the same. The eight major distributors released 380 features (including Westerns) last year. By canceling 20 per cent of the features, an exhibitor who bought from all these companies would have 304 selected features for 312 play-dates. Every important feature from all eight companies would get a showing.

"Without the cancellation today, if he fulfills all his contracts, he can only buy six of the eight major products. Two companies are always frozen out of the town, any way you figure it. Of course, it's not always the same two—no company even comes near to selling every account.

"With the option to cancel, isn't it plain that what a company loses theoretically by the exercise of the option to cancel is more than made up by the extra accounts they acquire from situations where they are now squeezed out? If one company loses \$200,000 in cancellations, who gets the \$200,000 business? It doesn't vanish, somebody inherits that much more business they otherwise would not get, because the theatre will still fill every playdate just the same. Isn't it inevitable that the same company will inherit an equal amount of the new business from the other seven competing companies?"

It is surprising how time moulds the opinions of persons. Mr. Kuykendall did everything there was in his power to defeat the Neely Bill, originally introduced by Senator Brookhart, in 1918. He left no stone unturned since that date to attain his object. And now, in order for him to induce, apparently, the producers to grant the 20% cancellation provision, he employs the very arguments Mr. Abram F. Myers and every Allied leader has advanced to prove that the total elimination of block-booking will not harm the producers. Editorial after editorial was printed in HARRISON'S REPORTS in support of this very argument.

Mr. Kuykendall appropriates the arguments of the Allied leaders to convince the producers that if they were to concede to a 20% cancellation, their interests will not be hurt, by pointing out to them that there is at any one time a given number of play-dates, which must be filled with the existing pictures at that particular time. If the exhibitor is given the right to cancel 20% of the pictures of one producer, he must contract from other producers for an equal number of canceled pictures to fill in his playing time. Why isn't it true, then, that the same condition will prevail if block-booking were eliminated entirely? Perhaps one company may lose \$1,000,000 from exhibitors who will refrain from booking its weak pictures, but is it not true that this company will more than make up its loss from play-dates that are available to it by those exhibitors who refrained from booking weak pictures of other companies?

The only difference between the position of Ed. Kuykendall and that of Mr. Myers is this: Ed. Kuykendall wants the establishment of the right of an exhibitor to cancel 20% of the contracted pictures, whereas Mr. Myers wants the exhibitor to have an unrestricted right to book whatever pictures will suit his particular requirements. The Kuy-

kendall proposal, if accepted, will not bind the producers; if another administration should come into power in Washington, more friendly to them, they could notify the exhibitors that they have withdrawn the cancellation right, whereas Allied wants the cancellation, or rather the non-purchasing, right established by law.

Another difference in the method each pursues is this: Mr. Myers has been consistent, for he has stuck to the same policy all along, whereas Kuykendall is inconsistent, for he changes his views like a weather vane.

### HOW BIGOTRY CAN BEST BE FOUGHT

Maurice Kann, editor-in-chief of *Box Office*, calls this paper's attention to a piece of scurrilous literature that has been circulated in the midwest, attacking people of the Jewish race, accusing them of controlling communism through the anti-Nazi League, and calling upon Americans to boycott the movies. The facts are given in the October 1 issue of *Box Office*.

HARRISON'S REPORTS gladly joins Mr. Kann in stigmatizing this vicious propaganda, instigated no doubt by believers in Nazi type of totalitarianism, and suggests to exhibitors to fight it with all the means at their command, not only because the democratic principle of tolerance is violated, but also because the interests of the entire industry will suffer unless such propaganda is counteracted.

To the suggestions of Mr. Kann as to how this vicious propaganda against the industry could be counteracted, HARRISON'S REPORTS desires to add the following:

There should be produced a single reel with some of the most prominent moving picture stars delivering a speech to picture audiences, assuring the American people that there is no communism in Hollywood.

In the case of Shirley Temple, whose name has figured prominently in the investigation of the Dies Committee, an attempt to ridicule the assertion should be made. And one way by which it could be ridiculed is to show Shirley giving a suit of clothes to some poor girl and a bystander saying: "She is a communist!"

The industry leaders may have a different way of doing it; but it should be done and every exhibitor in the country should volunteer to show such a reel on his screen.

That is, of course, an indirect way of fighting propaganda, but HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that, in fighting this sort of attack upon the industry, the indirect way is the most effective.

HARRISON'S REPORTS calls upon the industry's leaders to consider these suggestions.

### MOTION PICTURE RESEARCH COUNCIL STILL ACTIVE AGAINST BLOCK BOOKING

Motion Picture Research Council has not given up its fight against block booking just because the Neely Bill was defeated, or tabled (which means almost the same thing), in the House of Representatives, for it continues to contact its membership so as to keep the spirit against block booking and blind selling alive.

Motion Picture Research Council is a powerful organization and its support of the exhibitor cause has been of great help.

I have no doubt that the Allied leaders are getting ready for the battle next January. If every exhibitor will exert his efforts at least to the same degree that he exerted them this year and the previous years, with the support we are getting from civic, fraternal, as well as religious organizations we should have no trouble in seeing block booking and blind selling outlawed by a federal statute.



**"The Arkansas Traveler" with Bob Burns, Fay Bainter, Jean Parker and John Beal**

(Paramount, October 14; time, 83 min.)

Good entertainment, with human interest, romance, and comedy. The small-town characters and background make it ideal fare for neighborhood theatres. Bob Burns plays the part of the hobo printer to perfection, winning one's sympathy by his kindness and courage. The manner in which he outwits the town's richest man, preventing him from duping the woman editor of the town's newspaper, should prove highly amusing and satisfactory to most audiences. Although the closing scenes may seem slightly far-fetched, they are exciting and laugh-provoking. The romance is pleasant:—

Burns, a good-natured hobo, arrives at the small town where he takes over the job of typesetter for Fay Bainter, editor of the newspaper. He does not tell her that he had known her husband, who had died, and that he had come to the town to help her for he felt that she might be too proud to accept help. John Beal, son of the Mayor, arrives in town; he had hurried home to see his sick mother, but, having arrived too late, decides to leave again; but Burns, who had taken an interest in him and noticed that Miss Bainter's daughter (Jean Parker) loved the young man, forces him to stay in town by pressing charges against him. When Beal gets to know Burns he forgives him and promises to work on the newspaper in order to rid the town of his crooked father and Lyle Talbot, the town's richest man. Miss Parker, who had taith in Talbot, resents the articles they print about him; but finally Burns convinces her that what he was writing was true. Discovering that the newspaper had a radio franchise, Burns enlists the aid of his hobo friends to help him get the station working. Talbot, who wanted the newspaper and the station to carry on his crooked work, tries to stop the workers, but Burns outwits him; the station is built in time. Burns suggests to the townsfolk that they elect Beal Mayor; his suggestion is carried out. Feeling that he had completed his work, Burns prepares to leave, but Beal prevents him from doing so. Beal and Miss Parker are married.

Jack Cunningham wrote the story and Viola Brothers Shore and George S. Perry, the screen play; Alfred Santell directed it and George M. Arthur produced it. In the cast are Irving S. Cobb, Dickie Moore, Porter Hall, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"King of Alcatraz" with J. Carrol Naish, Lloyd Nolan and Gail Patrick**

(Paramount, September 30; time, 55½ min.)

A good gangster melodrama. Although most of the story takes place aboard a ship, there is plentiful exciting action; one is held in tense suspense throughout. The picture starts off in a comical fashion, with bickering between two scagging friends, who fight at the least provocation; but once both men are aboard ship and become involved with the gangsters, the comedy is dropped for melodrama. The methods used by the two pals to overpower the gangsters should thrill spectators. A pleasant romance is worked into the plot:—

Lloyd Nolan and Robert Preston, ship radio operators, are constantly quarreling and getting into scrapes. Porter Hall, owner of the steamship line for which they worked, transfers them to a freighter, warning them that, unless they worked harmoniously, he would discharge them. Nolan is surprised to find Gail Patrick on board as ship's nurse; they loved each other but had parted because of Nolan's wildness; Preston confesses that he, too, loved Miss Patrick. It develops that the small group of passengers were all gangsters, and the leader (J. Carrol Naish), an escaped convict from Alcatraz. They take over the ship by force and order the Captain to change the course. Nolan is shot when he attempts to overpower one of the men. Miss Patrick receives instructions by radio from another ship's doctor as to how to operate on Nolan and save his life. Eventually, through quick thinking by one of the stokers, the members of the crew overpower the gangsters and get them to the authorities. Nolan and Miss Patrick become reconciled, and Foster is best man at the wedding.

Irving Reis wrote the story and screen play; Robert Florey directed it. In the cast are Harry Carey, Anthony Quinn, Richard Stanley, and others.

Suitability, Class B.

**"A Man to Remember" with Edward Ellis, Anne Shirley and Lee Bowman**

(RKO, October 14; time, 78 min.)

A very good program drama. The simple story has deep human appeal, and there are a few situations that touch one's emotions, bringing tears to the eyes. The action is neither fast nor exciting; nevertheless, the story is so absorbing and the leading characters so appealing that one's attention is held throughout. Edward Ellis, as the small-town doctor around whom the story revolves, gives an excellent performance; his actions in sacrificing material comforts to help the poor are inspiring. The romance is the least important part of the picture. The story is told in flashback:—

Ellis, a doctor, settles in a small town with his motherless son. His patients are mostly the poor folk, who pay him out in potatoes and the like. When a poor woman dies in childbirth, the embittered husband leaves the infant girl on Ellis' doorstep. Ellis does not complain; he raises the girl as if she were his own child. The girl (Anne Shirley) grows up to be a great comfort to him. Ellis meets with his first disappointment when his son (Lee Bowman), who had returned home after completing his medical studies in Europe, informs him that he was going to work with the leading doctor in town, who had a lucrative practice. But Ellis goes on working just the same. Called in to see a sick child, he feels quite certain that the child had infantile paralysis. He rushes to the town officials, begging them to call off the County Fair they had planned; but they refuse. Ellis, with the help of Miss Shirley, issues handbills pleading with mothers to keep their children home, assuring them that he would call at their homes to spray children's throats. When the epidemic becomes serious in other towns and does not affect Ellis' patients, the officials and doctors finally realize what a courageous thing Ellis had done. He is honored by his neighbors; he dies happy in the thought that his son had given up the fashionable practice to work among the poor, as he had done; and also that he was going to marry Miss Shirley. The whole town turns out at the funeral.

Katherine Haviland-Taylor wrote the story, and Dalton Trumbo, the screen play; Garson Kanin directed it, and Robert Sisk produced it. In the cast are William Henry, John Wray, Granville Bates, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Mad Miss Manton" with Barbara Stanwyck and Henry Fonda**

(RKO, October 21; time, 79 min.)

A good comedy-murder mystery melodrama. Although several murders are committed, the picture is not gruesome, for the tension is relieved by wise-cracks and comical situations. The story is interesting and, since the murderer's identity is not divulged until the last scene, one's attention is held throughout. The closing scenes in which Miss Stanwyck confronts the slightly mad murderer, who threatens to kill her, are thrilling. The romance is developed in a delightful and comical way. An added attraction for women patrons is the lavish production and the gorgeous clothes worn by Miss Stanwyck and her friends:

Miss Stanwyck, a wealthy debutante, and her group of girl friends are known for the pranks they play. While out walking with her dogs, Miss Stanwyck notices a young man, with whom she was acquainted, running out of a supposedly deserted house. She goes into the house and finds a dead man. She calls the police, but by the time they arrive the body is gone. The lieutenant (Sam Lavigne) warns Miss Stanwyck to stop playing jokes. Henry Fonda, newspaper reporter, prints an article ridiculing Miss Stanwyck; she starts a million dollar libel suit against him. Miss Stanwyck and her girl friends decide to solve the case themselves. They go to the apartment of the man who had been seen running out of the house, only to find him murdered. This time the police are convinced that something was wrong, particularly after they find the first body. Fonda falls in love with Miss Stanwyck and pleads with her to leave the case to the police, for he felt that she was endangering her life; but she persists in carrying on. The murderer traps her in her apartment and threatens to kill her; but Fonda and the police arrive just in time to save her and capture the murderer. Having fallen in love with Fonda, she decides to marry him.

Wilson Collison wrote the story, and Philip G. Epstein, the screen play; Leigh Jason directed it, and P. J. Wolfson produced it. In the cast are Frances Mercer, Stanley Ridges, Whitney Bourne, Vicki Lester, and others.

The murders make it unsuitable for children. Class B.



**"That Certain Age" with Deanna Durbin, Melvyn Douglas and Jackie Cooper**

(Universal [1937-38], October 7; time, 100 min.)

Excellent. The production is lavish and the direction outstanding. Not only does Deanna Durbin charm the audience by her beautiful singing voice, but also by her acting of a rather difficult part. Helped along considerably by an intelligent screen play, and by excellent supporting players, she makes the young girl in the throes of adolescent love so appealing that one feels deep sympathy for her; and at no time do her actions seem silly. The music is good, and the comedy extremely amusing:—

Deanna, daughter of a wealthy newspaper publisher (John Halliday), is annoyed when she is told by the servants that the guest house, which she and her friends were using as a rehearsal hall for a play they were going to give for the benefit of a Boy Scout troop, was to be vacated by them to be prepared for a guest her father was bringing home. They decide to make things so uncomfortable for the guest (Melvyn Douglas) that he would be forced to leave. But once Deanna meets Douglas, a sophisticated special feature writer, she forgets all about the play and her friends. Jackie Cooper, the director of the play, is heartbroken when he realizes what was happening; but Douglas is completely unaware of Deanna's feelings towards him. When Jackie congratulates him, Douglas is puzzled; upon questioning, he learns the truth and is shocked. He takes the matter up with Halliday and his wife (Irene Rich), but they find themselves unable to cope with the situation. Halliday hits upon an idea; when Douglas' friend (Nancy Carroll) arrives, he introduces her as Douglas' wife. Douglas pretends to treat Miss Carroll in an offhand manner; this so disgusts Deanna that she is cured of her romantic ideas. She goes back to her friends and to rehearsal, forgetting all about the agonies of love she had suffered; this makes Cooper happy.

F. Hugh Herbert wrote the story, and Bruce Manning, the screen play; Edward Ludwig directed it, and Joe Pasternak produced it. In the cast are Jackie Searl, Juanita Quigley, Peggy Stewart, and others.

Class A.

**"Stablemates" with Mickey Rooney and Wallace Beery**

(MGM, October 7; time, 89 min.)

Good entertainment, with very good box-office possibilities because of the popularity of Mickey Rooney and Wallace Beery. The story is not novel; but, because of the performances given by Mickey and Beery, it seems to take on new life and holds one's interest throughout. It has considerable human appeal and a few situations that touch one's emotions deeply. There is no romance, and the two women who appear in the cast have minor parts; nevertheless, it should appeal to women because of the relationship that develops between Mickey and Beery. The action is a little slow at times due to too much talk; but the end is exciting and touching, too:—

Mickey, a jockey, has great faith in the horse he had been taking care of. When the horse fails to make a good showing at an important race, its owner decides to dispose of it. Mickey pleads with the owner to sell it to him, offering to give him everything he owned; the owner agrees and Mickey is overjoyed. He is annoyed when Beery, a drunkard, who hung around the track, speaks disparagingly of the horse; but when Beery tells him just what the trouble was he is impressed. Mickey comes to the conclusion that Beery must have been the famous veterinarian he was talking about. Beery at first denies it, but, when the boy tearfully pleads with him to save the horse, he operates on it. Beery and Mickey become great friends and in a short time decide to adopt each other as father and son, respectively. By working hard, they earn enough money to enter the horse in an important race. But Mickey is miserable when he finds out from a certain detective that Beery was wanted on a criminal charge; he tries to keep Beery away from the track, but in vain. The horse wins; but Mickey's joy is dimmed when Beery is apprehended. They take tearful leave and assure each other that the year Beery had to serve would not be too long to wait. Mickey is taken under the wing of Marjorie Gateson, a generous stable owner, who had helped him race his horse.

William Thiele and Reginald Owen wrote the story, and Leonard Praskins and Richard Maibaum, the screen play; Sam Wood directed it, and Harry Rapt produced it. In the cast are Margaret Hamilton, Minor Watson, Oscar O'Shea, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Vacation from Love" with Denis O'Keefe, Florence Rice and Reginald Owen**

(MGM, September 30; time, 65 min.)

An entertaining program romantic farce, with a fairly lavish production. In spite of the fact that the story is not new, it manages to keep one amused throughout because of the comical situations and wisecracks; in addition, the action is fast. The characters are appealing, and the parts are played with spirit:—

When Denis O'Keefe, a saxophone player in a night club band, reads that Florence Rice, with whom he had fallen in love at first sight, was going to marry a silly-looking society man, he decides to do something about it. He and his pal (Edward Brophy) manage to get into her house; O'Keefe stops the ceremony by objecting to the bridegroom. Reginald Owen, Miss Rice's father, is horrified and orders the servants to throw O'Keefe out. But Miss Rice decides that O'Keefe was right and runs out. O'Keefe helps her escape, and then tells her how he had seen her once and had fallen in love with her; she decides she loves him and, despite her father's objections, marries him. Owen takes O'Keefe into his advertising business and the young man proves to be very competent. Although he and his wife are still madly in love, O'Keefe's duties at the office keep them from having a good time. Quarrels follow and they part. Miss Rice goes to Paris for a divorce; O'Keefe follows her. During the trial, they suddenly decide to drop the action and start over again.

Harlan Ware and Patterson McNutt wrote the story and screen play; George Fitzmaurice directed it, and Orville O. Dull produced it. In the cast are June Knight, Herman Bing, and Tom Rutherford.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Sisters" with Bette Davis and Errol Flynn**

(Warner Bros., October 15; time, 98 min.)

A very good box-office attraction, considering the popularity of the stars. The story, which was adapted from the novel by Myron Brinig, was cleaned up considerably, and the ending changed to a more cheerful one; this is to the picture's benefit. It offers, in addition to the dramatic and romantic angles, good material for exploitation; for instance, the period in which the story takes place, from 1904 to 1908, is an interesting one and is depicted lavishly and with realism; then there is the San Francisco earthquake, which, although not built up to any considerable extent, is exciting. The story is, in its way, slightly episodic since it deals with events in the lives of three sisters; but one's interest is focused mostly on Miss Davis, with whom the spectator is in deep sympathy:—

The story revolves around three sisters—Miss Davis, Anita Louise, and Jane Bryan. Miss Davis marries Flynn, an adventurous newspaper writer who had plans to write a book; she goes to San Francisco with him. Miss Bryan marries a young wealthy banker (Dick Foran), and is happy in her domestic life; Miss Louise, flirtatious and selfish, marries wealthy Alan Hale, a man old enough to be her father, and goes to Europe with him. Although Flynn loves his wife passionately, he feels tied down by marriage and takes to drink; he resents furthermore the fact that he did not earn enough to give his wife luxuries. But Miss Davis is patient. She is happy when she becomes pregnant; but constant worry and hard work bring on a miscarriage; Flynn begs for forgiveness and promises to work hard. But things go bad and he loses his job. Miss Davis takes a position as secretary to Ian Hunter, department store owner; he falls madly in love with her. Flynn, unable to stand things as they were, signs up on a ship and goes away; Miss Davis is heartbroken. She is injured during the earthquake and cared for by a friend; Hunter and her father find her and take her home. She recuperates and goes back to work, becoming very successful. She helps Miss Bryan out of a predicament, when Foran becomes enmeshed with the town prostitute. In the meantime, Hale dies and Miss Louise marries again; she soon tires of her new husband and contemplates a divorce to marry again. Flynn returns after a two year absence; he was longing to see his wife again; they are reunited.

Milton Krims wrote the screen play, Anatole Litvak directed it, and David Lewis was associate producer. In the cast are Beulah Bondi, Henry Travers, Patric Knowles, Lee Patrick, and others.

It is doubtful if children will understand the suggestiveness in some of the situations; suitability, Class A.



## THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)

### Exhibitor-Distributor Conciliation

Dating from the year one in the motion picture industry there has been a consistent battle between producer and producer, distributor and exhibitor, circuit and independent. Never have any of the opposing elements been able to agree on any controversial problem.

A few months ago came the government's anti-trust suit. The first reaction on the part of those who would benefit most by the intervention of the government was "they had it coming to them." But despite the benefits that would accrue to independents in all branches of the industry, they joined with the defendants in stating that they did not want the government messing in the film industry.

Since the filing of the suit the following developments have taken place: Self-regulation conferences which were either planned or in process were cancelled; expensive legal batteries were engaged by the defendants who, after ignoring invitations to confer with the government's attorneys, later met with them with undisclosed results; a rash of individual suits broke out and bills for theatre divoreement are being framed for introduction into the various state legislatures.

Based on past performances it is hardly likely that the suit will reach the trial stage before another eighteen months. In the meantime, can anything be done to clean our houses so that the government will not find it necessary to do it for us?

This suit was brought on entirely through the efforts of independent exhibitors. When they had justifiable complaints about which the distributors refused to do anything, there was only one course open to the exhibitor—appeal to the courts for relief. Because of the interstate nature of the business and of the high cost of trials the Department of Justice was the logical place to file these grievances. With such a mass of evidence in their possession, and much more whenever they wanted it, the government had a strong case in which they are an odds on favorite to win.

Is it too illogical or naive to suppose that the government would drop the suit if the distributor and exhibitor sat down and ironed out their differences over a conference table rather than in a court room?

I, for one, am convinced that, if the various branches of the industry can show the government a clean bill of health, the suit will be dropped. I do not believe that the government is particularly anxious to drag our dirty linen into court if they can be shown that justice can be done outside of the courtroom.

\* \* \*

### A Sudden Distributor Discovery!

Comes the new year and a most pleasant surprise for us. We suddenly discovered that we were the victims of a huge joke—it wasn't at all necessary to buy all those short subjects the film salesman said we had to!

Being endowed with a sense of humor there was nothing that we could do but laugh and resolve that it would never happen again. We were going to take the statements of the various sales executives as reported by *Box Office*, blow them up to a 40x60, and display it in a prominent place in our sanctum sanctorum. It is to serve a two fold purpose—to prove that we had a sense of humor and as guarantee that we wouldn't be ribbed any more.

Copy for our 40x60 will read:

*Neil F. Agnew, Paramount Pictures, Inc.:* "Paramount's policy is clear. We sell shorts whenever we can. Nobody is forced to buy them. Such a procedure has never been feasible or practical. I believe that most exhibitors make fair deals. We do not force them to buy shorts where they cannot use them."

*William A. Scully, Universal:* "Our representatives are instructed to advise exhibitors as to the quality of our short product and prevail upon them to purchase as many of these shorts as their requirements permit. We force no one to buy our shorts in order to buy our features."

*20th Century-Fox spokesman restating S. R. Kent's position:* "It has never been the practice of this company to force shorts with features. As a practical matter of distribution they are sold at the same time but under different agreements."

*Abe Montague, Columbia:* "It has never been the practice of this company to 'force' shorts with features as the expression is commonly used by exhibitors."

*George J. Schaefer, United Artists:* "The sale of features has nothing to do with the sale of shorts here."

*Earle W. Hammonds, Grand National:* "I have never believed in forcing shorts; it has never been a sound policy."

*William F. Rodgers, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer:* "We do not make it conditional that short subjects be leased in order to obtain our features."

These quotations are going to make a beautiful 40x60. In fact I don't know of another poster from which I will derive so much pleasure.

Only one thing is bothering me—why practically every one of the sales executives said, in essence, that while it was not necessary to buy shorts in order to get features, they did believe that shorts should be sold in the same proportion to the number of features sold. That is, if you buy half of a company's features you should buy half of their shorts. And if you buy all their features, you should take all the shorts!

\* \* \*

### A Sensational Distributor Statement

Frequently many of the industry's important men make statements which are so self-explanatory and far-reaching that they can be quoted without any editorial comment whatsoever:

Such a statement was recently made by Mr. George J. Schaefer before a group of Philadelphia exhibitors. We are pleased to reprint it here:

"It is manifestly unfair for a producing company to have the right of cancellation in its contract without giving the exhibitor the same right. If our company finds it necessary, because of technical reasons or otherwise to cancel a picture included in an agreement, then I believe that the entire group of undelivered pictures should likewise be canceled to give the exhibitor the right to reappraise the value of the whole group.

"I do not believe that it is fair for a producer to cancel a picture which looks like a probable hit for the purpose of raising the price in a new contract—and then leave the exhibitor holding the bag for the inferior product."

## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF 1937-38 SEASON'S PICTURES—No. 6

### Warner Bros.

"Little Miss Thoroughbred," with John Litel, Ann Sheridan and Janet Chapin, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by John Farrow, from a screen play by Albert DeMond and George Bricker: Fair.

"Gold Diggers in Paris," with Rudy Vallee, Rosemary Lane and Allen Jenkins, produced by Sam Bischoff and directed by Ray Enright, from a screen play by Earl Baldwin and Warren Duff: Good-Poor.

"White Banquets," with Fay Bainter, Claude Rains and Jackie Cooper, produced by Henry Blanke and directed by Edmund Goulding, from a screen play by Lenore Coffe, Cameron Rogers and Abem Finkel: Very Good-Good.

"Men Are Such Fools," with Wayne Morris, Priscilla Lane, Hugh Herbert and Humphrey Bogart, produced by David Lewis and directed by Busby Berkeley, from a screen play by Norman Reilly Raine and Horace Jackson: Good-Poor.

"Cowboy from Brooklyn," with Dick Powell, Pat O'Brien and Priscilla Lane, produced by Lou Edelman and directed by Lloyd Bacon, from a screen play by Earl Baldwin: Very Good-Good.

"Mr. Chump," with Johnnie Davis, Lola Lane and Penny Singleton, produced by Bryan Foy and directed by William Clemens, from a screen play by George Bricker: Fair-Poor.

"Racket Busters," with Humphrey Bogart, George Brent and Gloria Dickson, produced by Sam Bischoff and directed by Lloyd Bacon, from a screen play by Robert Rossen and Leonardo Bereovici: Very Good-Fair.

Twenty-six pictures have already been released. Grouping the pictures of the different ratings from the beginning of the season, we get the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 5; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 5; Good-Poor, 6; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 6.

Twenty-seven pictures were released during the 1936-37 season, excluding the Westerns; they were rated as follows:

Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Very Good-Poor, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 6; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 3.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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No. 43

## A TRADE-PRESS CONFERENCE WITH THE DISTRIBUTOR NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

For the purpose of keeping the press informed as to the developments of producer-exhibitor conferences, Mr. W. F. Rodgers, general sales manager of MGM and chairman of the distributor committee, sent for the members of the trade press to meet him at his office Tuesday, at 11 in the morning.

Messrs. Ned Depinet, of R. K. O., Gradwell Sears, of Warner Bros., and Abe Montague, of Columbia, of the negotiating committee, were present.

In view of the fact that the meetings have not yet started there was nothing definite to give out; but Mr. Depinet, speaking on behalf of the distributor committee, asked for the wholehearted cooperation of the press. He said that the distributors were condemned in the past for having failed to get together with the exhibitors to remove the causes of complaints, but since a definite and sincere effort is now being made he requested the trade press to be patient in regards to news as to the development of the negotiations.

Mr. Rodgers assured the members of the trade press that they will be informed regularly, at stated times, as to the progress of the negotiations.

What the writer observed is that the members of the distributor committee were inspired with sincerity in their efforts to come together with the exhibitors; and if the heads of the companies they represent along with the other companies should be inspired with the same sentiments there is no reason why a satisfactory agreement should not be reached.

Allied has already accepted the invitation to confer with the distributors.

## THE PRODUCER ASSURANCES ABOUT NOT FORCING PURCHASE OF SHORTS

They are making themselves ridiculous. I am talking about the major producers who, as soon as MGM made the announcement that it does not compel the exhibitors to buy their shorts along with their features if such exhibitors have no room for shorts, began issuing statements they, too, had never compelled the exhibitor to buy their shorts along with their features.

It is perfectly clear that they are issuing such statements in an effort to convince the Government that they have not been unfair to the exhibitors in the sale of shorts, with the hope that the Government officials who have charge of the suit might believe them.

That the home offices of the major companies have been advised by their lawyers to ease up on the exhibitors in the matter of the sales of shorts and that the home offices have accepted their advice, this paper cannot doubt; but shorts are still being forced on the exhibitors, because they have not taken care to impress their sales representatives to stop compelling the exhibitors to buy shorts with features. They have, no doubt, notified them to that effect, but a mere notification is not sufficient to impress upon salesmen that a change of policy has been effected. How else can one interpret the fact that the salesmen are still forcing the exhibitors to buy shorts when they want the features? Several exhibitors with whom I have discussed the matter lately have told me: "Try and get them."

The difficulty of impressing the sales forces that a change of policy has been effected lies in this fact: because of the size of the circuits, both affiliated and unaffiliated, most of the selling is done in New York. As a result, not as many salesmen are employed today as there were in former years, when the circuits were few, and small.

Since the jobs for salesmen are now only a fraction of what they used to be, a salesman feels that, to hold his job, he must show volume sales; and since forcing shorts with features presents his home office with volume sales, he is not scrupulous in observing the Home Office orders about a change in sales policy. Can anyone then blame the exhibitor for seeking relief in legislative halls?

Before the week is over, you will read in the trade papers whether Allied will or will not accept the invitation of the producers' committee to talk things over with the idea of eradicating industry abuses and of setting up a system of conciliation. In all probability it will accept such invitation. Whether, however, something good can come out of these conferences remains to be seen.

In reference to these conferences, let us heed what Mr. Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States, said in his speech at the annual convention of Allied Theatre Owners of Michigan, held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, on October 12:

"In the next 65 days motion picture history may be written. If there is a sincere desire on the part of the distributors to set their house in order, great things may be accomplished. If it should develop that present overtures are merely a political trick to lull the exhibitors into quiescence until the Big Eight can square things

(Continued on last page)



**"Five of a Kind" with the Dionne Quintuplets, Jean Hersholt and Claire Trevor**

(20th Century-Fox, Oct. 14; time, 85 min.)

Just fair entertainment. The main attraction is the Quintuplets, for the story itself is rather weak. Where their other two pictures have gone over, this should do well, too, for there are several scenes in which the children appear; although there is nothing remarkable in what they do, it is amusing to watch the five of them together—playing, singing, and eating. Naturally, its appeal is mostly for women. Despite the efforts of the performers, the far-fetched story falls flat; even the romance is unbelievable:—

Claire Trevor and Cesar Romero, two rival newspaper reporters, are constantly playing tricks on each other. Their rivalry eventually leads them to the same town in Canada, where they both try to sign up the Quintuplets for a radio program. Romero, by posing as a police inspector from New York, induces the constable (Slim Summerville) to arrest Miss Trevor; but the trick is discovered and Miss Trevor is released. She obtains the contract from Jean Hersholt, the children's doctor. Henry Wilcoxon, a young doctor and director of a nursery in New York, calls on Miss Trevor to ask for her help in helping him raise funds for the nursery. She hits upon the idea of bringing the Quintuplets to New York for a benefit performance on behalf of the nursery. But Romero, through a trick, places Miss Trevor in a position where she is discredited; because of this the managers of the Quintuplets call off the performance. Realizing what he had done, Romero goes to the Canadian officials and confesses; but they refuse to permit the children to go to New York. Romero finally induces them to permit the performance to go on by means of television; and so the benefit performance is successful. Romero and Miss Trevor are reconciled.

Lou Breslow and John Patrick wrote the original screen play; Herbert I. Leeds directed it. In the cast are Inez Courtney, John Qualen, Jane Darwell, Pauline Moore, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"There Goes My Heart" with Fredric March, Virginia Bruce and Patsy Kelly**

(United Artists, Oct. 14; time, 83 min.)

A fairly good comedy. Lacking a substantial plot, the picture depends mostly on gags and wisecracks for its entertainment value; for the most part, these are good. Patsy Kelly provokes most of the laughter; two situations in which she appears, one, as a customer in a cafeteria and, another, as a demonstrator for a vibrator, are extremely comical and should provoke hearty laughter. As a matter of fact, each time she appears there is something to laugh about. The action lags a bit in a few spots; this is so particularly towards the end. Fredric March and Virginia Bruce make a pleasant romantic team, despite the routine way in which the romance is developed:—

Virginia Bruce, the world's wealthiest heiress, is tired of being denied freedom by her grandfather (Claude Gillingwater). When he is called to London on a business trip, she orders the Captain of her yacht to take her to New York; she then runs away. The newspapers learn of the latest exploit by the runaway heiress; Fredric March, a reporter, is assigned to the case by his editor. In the meantime, Miss Bruce strikes up an acquaintance in a cafeteria with Miss Kelly, who thinks she is homeless and penniless; Miss Kelly takes her to her shabby one-room apartment and then offers to get her a position in her own department store. Miss Bruce loves the experience and enjoys working. March finds out who she is, but does not let her suspect that he knew. They become good friends and he starts working on his story, promising to give it to the editor when it was completed; in the meantime, however, he falls in love with Miss Bruce. He tears up the story; but the irate editor pieces it together again and prints it. Naturally Miss Bruce is disgusted and agrees to go back to her grandfather. Miss Kelly, by a ruse, brings them together again, and sees to it that they get married.

Ed Sullivan wrote the story, and Eddie Moran and Jack Jevne, the screen play; Norman Z. McLeod directed it, and Hal Roach produced it. In the cast are Alan Mowbray, Nancy Carroll, Eugene Pallette, Arthur Lake, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Brother Rat" with Wayne Morris and Priscilla Lane**

(First National, Oct. 29; time, 88 min.)

A delightful comedy, centering around the lighter side of student life at Virginia Military Institute; the performances are excellent. Without resorting to music, or college dances, or football scenes, it offers something novel in the way of entertainment for a picture of this type. Most of the action centers around three students, who manage to get into trouble more than any of the others; their adventures and the resultant punishments are the cause for hearty laughter. It is all treated in a light vein, even to the romances; no serious problems are presented. This is the type of picture that makes a spectator forget his troubles and relax:—

Wayne Morris, Ronald Reagan, and Eddie Albert are roommates at V.M.I. Morris is constantly getting into trouble and dragging his pals in it with him. He induces Reagan to sneak out with him to visit Priscilla Lane, who had just arrived home with a girl friend. They are caught and punished. Albert was eagerly looking forward to winning the \$250 prize given to the school's best athlete. But the night before the big football game of the season, he learns from Jane Bryan, to whom he was secretly married, that he was to become a father. Realizing that he would be expelled if it became known that he was married, he becomes nervous. In the meantime, Morris, to whom Albert had entrusted \$50, decides to bet it on the game in order to help Albert along. But when Albert tells him about his troubles and expresses a desire not to play in the game, Morris chases around pawning whatever he could put his hands on in order to get enough money together to bet on the other team and so safeguard Albert's money. Albert is hit on the head with a ball, and his team loses the game; with that he loses the athletic prize. But he graduates and is overjoyed when he gets the news that he had a son; with this he gets \$300 for being the first father of his class.

The plot was adapted from the play by John Monks, Jr., and Fred Finklehoffe; Richard Macaulay and Jerry Wald wrote the screen play, William Keighley directed it, and Robert Lord produced it. In the cast are Johnnie Davis, Jane Wyman, Louise Beavers, Henry O'Neill, William Tracy, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Girls on Probation" with Jane Bryan, Ronald Reagan and Sheila Bromley**

(First National, Oct. 22; time, 63 min.)

A good program melodrama. It holds one's interest throughout because of the sympathy one feels for the heroine, who innocently becomes involved in crime due to the machinations of a particularly vicious character. There are several exciting situations; the closing scenes, where the crooks are caught, are thrilling. The hero, because of his faith in the heroine and his efforts to help her, is an appealing character:—

Held down by a harsh father (Sig Rumann), who refused to let her have good clothes or go out with young men, Jane Bryan decides to take the advice of Sheila Bromley and go out dancing with her and two young men; Miss Bromley suggests that Miss Bryan wear one of her dresses, which she accidentally tears. It develops that the dress had been taken by Miss Bromley from the cleaning store where she worked; the insurance company insists on prosecuting. Miss Bryan is arrested, but later, upon payment of the cost of the dress, is released. Miss Bromley had shifted all the blame on Miss Bryan and then had run away. A few months later Miss Bryan sees Miss Bromley sitting in an automobile; she enters the car to talk to her to ask her to clear her name; in that way she becomes involved in a bank robbery along with Miss Bromley and Anthony Averill. They are all caught, tried, and sentenced to prison. Miss Bryan wins the sympathy of a parole officer (Dorothy Peterson), who believes her story; she is released and goes back home. She works for Ronald Reagan, assistant district attorney; in a short time they are in love with each other. When Miss Bromley is released, she calls to see Miss Bryan and makes her miserable by saying that she was going to use her again. Miss Bryan tells Reagan what was happening. Eventually Miss Bryan is instrumental in turning over Miss Bromley and Averill, who had escaped from prison, to the police; her name is cleared.

Crane Wilbur wrote the story and screen play; William McGann directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Esther Dale, Elizabeth Risdon, Henry O'Neill, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



**"The Lady Vanishes" with Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave and Paul Lukas**

(Gaumont-British, Nov. 1; time, 91 min.)

A very good melodrama, with excellent comedy, and a charming romance. Alfred Hitchcock, director of "The 39 Steps" and "The Girl Was Young," again displays his talents in the field of melodrama; taking ordinary situations, he builds them up in so exciting a manner that the spectator is held in tense suspense. As a matter of fact some of the situations are so thrilling that they send chills down one's spine. Although most of the action takes place aboard a train, the pace is fast and the action thrilling. The comedy, both in dialogue and situation, is unusually good:—

Margaret Lockwood, a beautiful English girl, leaves the Balkans, where she had been vacationing, to return to London, there to marry a titled Englishman. She is annoyed to find that Michael Redgrave, an easy-going musician whom she disliked, was on the same train. She becomes acquainted with Dame May Whitty, a harmless-looking spinster, who takes care of her when she is accidentally hit on the head by a flower-pot. Miss Whitty suggests that she go to sleep. When she awakens and asks the other passengers in her compartment where Miss Whitty was, they look at her strangely and claim that no one else had been in that compartment. Paul Lukas, a brain specialist, shows an interest in Miss Lockwood and suggests that the blow on her head might have affected her. Miss Lockwood turns to Redgrave for help; it takes her a long time to convince him that such a person as Dame Whitty existed. Their investigation leads them to the surprising discovery that they were dealing with dangerous characters; they take Lukas into their confidence, not knowing he was one of the conspirators. They eventually find and rescue Dame Whitty; she admits that she was a member of the British Intelligence Service and that she had information that Lukas and his assistants did not want her to pass on. After many thrilling adventures, during which their lives are endangered when Lukas detaches their car from the rest of the train, Redgrave and some of the other passengers finally overpower the conspirators and get to the border safely. In the meantime, Miss Lockwood and Redgrave had fallen madly in love with each other and decide to marry.

Ethel Lina White wrote the story, and Sidney Gilliat and Frank Launder, the screen play; in the cast are Cecil Parker, Linden Travers, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Down in Arkansaw" with Ralph Byrd, Weaver Brothers and Elviry**

(Republic, Sept. 29; time, 65 min.)

This hillbilly comedy-melodrama, with music, offers fairly good program entertainment for neighborhood theatres and small towns. The Weaver Brothers and Elviry provoke laughter by their antics and sing hillbilly songs in their customary style. Excitement is caused when agents for the scheming power company attempt to thwart the Government's efforts to build a power dam. The mild romance is of slight importance:—

Ralph Byrd, government agent, is ordered to serve a summons on the mountain folk, in the government's test case to get a decision as to whether or not they could force the mountaineers to vacate their homes, so as to make way for the building of a government power dam; the government was willing to place the mountain folk in new homes. Things work out smoothly until the agents for the scheming power company, that did not want to see the project go through, stir up trouble. The court finally decides in favor of the mountaineers. But Byrd has another idea; he puts up a sample house to show them how much more comfortable they would be in a new place. But things go wrong when the agents shoot one of the mountain boys and start the feuding again. Byrd uncovers the identity of the troublemakers and forces them to confess. This satisfies the mountaineers and they agree to go through with the government's suggestion. Byrd marries one of the mountain girls.

Dorrel and Stuart McGowan wrote the original screen play; Nick Grinde directed it, and Armand Schaefer produced it. In the cast are June Storey, Pinky Tomlin, Berton Churchill, Guinn Williams, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Last Express" with Kent Taylor and Dorothea Kent**

(Universal, Oct. 28; time, 62½ min.)

Just a moderately entertaining program murder mystery melodrama, with comedy. In its favor is the comedy, which is good; this is provoked by wisecracks and occasional stupid actions on the part of the hero's assistant. But the story is so muddled that it is difficult for the spectator to follow it; one has no idea as to how the hero gets his information to unravel the mystery, or why certain characters are mixed up in the case. There is just a hint at a romance:

Kent Taylor, a private detective, and his assistant (Don Brodie) are selected by Addison Richards, gambler and racketeer, to act as go-between in a transaction whereby certain incriminating papers that had been stolen from the District Attorney's office involving Richards would be turned over in exchange for a large amount of money. The money is stolen from them. Taylor's investigations lead him to a member of the District Attorney's staff (Edward Requello); but before Taylor could find out anything Requello is killed, presumably from a shot fired at him by a discarded sweetheart, a married woman, whose husband was involved in the case, too. Following a statement made by Requello before he died, Taylor, in company with the District Attorney and others, goes to an abandoned subway where he finds the money and the papers. He finally clears the case by proving that Paul Hurst, who worked in the District Attorney's office, was the murderer and the one who had stolen the papers and negotiated for their sale. With the work finished, Taylor decides to devote his time to an attractive witness (Dorothea Kent), who had been questioned in the case.

Baynard Kendrick wrote the story, and Edmund L. Hartmann, the screen play; Otis Garrett directed it, and Irving Starr produced it. In the cast are Greta Granstedt, Robert E. Keane, J. Farrell MacDonald, and others.

Because of the murder it is unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Young Dr. Kildare" with Lew Ayres, Lionel Barrymore and Lynne Carver**

(MGM, Oct. 14; time, 81 min.)

An engrossing drama, centering around the medical profession; both the direction and acting are of the highest order. One is in deep sympathy with the hero, a young doctor, whose ideals prevent him from taking the easiest road to success; his earnestness and sincerity are inspiring. Even when the plot wanders off to a melodramatic side-issue involving a patient, one's interest is held, for the hero's future depended on the outcome of the case. The romance is minimized; but this is in keeping with the story, and, although the ending may disappoint those romantically inclined, it is the only logical conclusion. There are occasional spurts of comedy:—

When Lew Ayres returns to his small home town a full-fledged doctor, his parents (Emma Dunn and Samuel S. Hinds) are happy for they felt that he would work with his father, a country doctor. But Ayres had other ideas; although he did not want to hurt his parents, he felt that he had to find out where he really belonged in medicine before he settled down. And so he goes to a large New York hospital as an interne. This makes his sweetheart (Lynne Carver) unhappy; but she does not stop him. Ayres is noticed by Lionel Barrymore, a brilliant diagnostician; but because of the caustic remarks Barrymore passes Ayres thinks he disliked him. Ayres gets into trouble because of his stand in a case involving the young daughter of wealthy parents; the hospital authorities, guided by an eminent authority on mental cases, were of the opinion that the girl was mentally unbalanced, but Ayres, having talked to the girl, knows that something was troubling her. He investigates and finds out what had happened to her; he is then able to talk to her and make her realize that she had imagined many things. In that way he brings her back to a normal state. Ayres is nevertheless dismissed for insubordination; he prepares to go back home. But Barrymore, who appreciated Ayres' talents, chooses him as his assistant.

Max Brand wrote the story, and Willis Goldbeck and Harry Ruskin, the screen play; Harold S. Bucquet directed it. In the cast are Walter Kingsford, Truman Bradley, Jo Ann Sayers, Nat Pendleton, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



with the Government and slip unscathed through another session of Congress and the State legislatures, the whole thing will blow up with a bang that will be heard from Maine to California. There is no evidence of any such sinister purpose and I would not have issued a call for the board if I had not believed that Bill Rodgers told Nate and me. And so I am uttering a prayer for the success of the movement which Rodgers has so skillfully launched, a plea for continued confidence in and support of Allied and a committee which it may name, and a solemn warning to distributors and exhibitors alike that during the next 65 days they will be very much on the spot. All concerned in the forthcoming deliberations will be under close observation by the entire industry, the Government and the organized consumer groups. Any display of insincerity, bad faith, personal selfishness or attempted conniving will meet with swift retribution."

### **DISTRIBUTORS WILLING TO SELL BUT EXHIBITORS REFUSING TO BUY**

According to a recent Minneapolis dispatch, printed in *Variety*, the representatives of some of the major companies are not in a rush to sell their product, and that the exhibitors, because of this "absent treatment" these major distributors are giving them, are worried.

In view of the fact that *Variety's* Minneapolis man has received this bit of information from the exchanges, the story sounds "fishy." Moreover, the information that has reached Harrison's Reports from several parts of the United States confirms this view.

The following seems to be the exact state of affairs: The independent exhibitors of the Minneapolis zone, who are all, with a few exceptions, members of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest, have refrained from rushing into buying their 1938-39 season's product. They were instructed to be slow in buying by their own organization.

Seeing that the exhibitors were slow in making purchases, the exchangemen decided to employ a bit of psychology to expedite sales. They evidently believe that, by throwing a scare into the exhibitors' hearts, they might frighten every one of them into buying pictures at once. It is a stunt as old as history, which does not always work.

From information that this paper has received all along, it seems as if the exhibitors have learned their lesson; they feel that there is no use paying for pictures prices that will bring them a loss. If their competitors want to work for the exchanges, that is very fine, so far as they are concerned; the wise ones are determined to get some profit for their work. Glory alone—the glory of operating a theatre, does not pay either the landlord or the butcher.

### **THOUGHTS AT RANDOM**

(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)

Newspapers Discontinuing Previews

According to reports, Los Angeles and Hollywood theatres have reached an agreement with their newspapers whereby reviews of previews

will no longer be published. The picture will now be reviewed just as they are in every city—when the picture opens its regular engagement.

If the producers could reach the same agreement with the air gossipers a great deal of good would be accomplished.

When a picture is previewed in Hollywood it does not necessarily mean that the picture is then ready for general release. Often, on the basis of the audience reaction, scenes are added or deleted. However the picture is "aired" on the basis of the preview.

Several men attempt to tell millions of people of dissimilar tastes and intelligence what is good and what is bad. Consequently the exhibitor has little opportunity to tell his patrons about a coming attraction for they have already heard all about it several weeks before the exhibitor even knew when he was going to play it.

The writer, frankly, would like to see gossipers off the air entirely. If that cannot be done, we're willing to settle for dissertations on the latest Hollywood fashions and hairdresses.

### **Exhibitor-Distributor Conferences**

At long last the distributors have agreed to sit down at the conference table with the exhibitors and try to iron out their differences:

Invitations have been sent over the signature of William F. Rodgers, MGM general sales-manager, to the MPTOA and Allied States along with eight regional unaffiliated regional groups. Thus a new milestone has been reached.

In 1936, both the national exhibitor bodies framed a list of grievances and pleaded with the distributors to do something about them. Negotiations were carried on in a haphazard manner and in two years absolutely no progress whatsoever was made, unless, of course, you can class the entrance of the government into the situation as progress.

Both exhibitor group programs, after two years, retain their original form:—

(1) An unrestricted 20% cancellation right; (2) Establishment of local conciliation boards for the adjustment of exhibitor-distributor complaints; (3) Elimination of the score charge; (4) A ban on the forcing of the sale of shorts with features; (5) Elimination of designated playdates; (6) A prohibition on overbuying of product; (7) A correction of "unfair" clearance and zoning schedules; (8) Adoption of a short form of exhibition licensing agreement; (9) A curb on cut-rate competition; (10) A curb on non-theatrical competition (radio). In addition Allied objects to undue theatre expansion, non-delivery of pictures, and compulsory block booking.

That these trade talks are but the first in the important events that will effect distribution and exhibition in the next year goes without saying. While the various exhibitor groups are in a position where they can drive a hard bargain we do not expect them to pull a "Munich" but to iron out their differences with the distributors on a fair and equitable basis. The programs are in no way harsh or unreasonable but merely the outgrowth of years of abuse on the part of the distributors.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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### THE TRADE PRACTICES CONFERENCES

I don't want to throw a monkey wrench into the machinery of trade practices conferences by criticizing them before they have been completed, but certain signs indicating that nothing constructive will come out of them are so strong that, were I to refrain from commenting upon them now, I would feel as if I failed in my duty to the independent theatre owners.

One of these signs is the fact that MPTOA is included in these conferences, although the representatives of this organization and two members of the producer committee (Sidney R. Kent and Ned Depinet) are holding conferences separately; that is, not in conjunction with representatives of Allied States.

What the producers want the independent theatre owners to understand is, no doubt, that they have a desire to be impartial, and at the same time fair: they want to convey the impression that they are giving each national independent exhibitor organization an equal chance.

That would be a fine move if MPTOA represented bona fide independent exhibitor interests; but it does not represent any such interests. And here is the reason for it: Every one of you knows, I am sure, that the money for the upkeep of this organization comes from the producers' coffers, paid to it through dues by the theatres they own. How could such an organization, then, represent independent exhibitors? Does it require great imagination to know that a threat on the part of the producers to put an end to all financial support would make this organization's representatives do their bidding?

It is true that some independent exhibitors do belong to this organization, but this fact does not make them bona fide members, for the proof of an exhibitor's membership to an organization is payment of dues. And I doubt whether all the independent exhibitors who belong to MPTOA pay to all its units combined even \$2,000 a year, not enough to pay the salary of the secretary of even one unit. And this money is contributed only by such exhibitors as either have been misled, or fear reprisals by the exchanges if they were to join an Allied unit.

Since the producers are aware of the fact that the independent exhibitors know the nature of this organization, is not their very act of having invited its representatives to confer with their own representatives to establish an understanding with independent exhibitors the best proof of their insincerity?

I don't mean to question the sincerity of the producer committee members. As a matter of fact I believe that, if they were given an un-

restricted right to use their own good judgment, a full understanding with the independent exhibitors could have been reached by this time. But they have not been given, as I see it, freedom of action: the final approval as to what concessions should be granted to the exhibitors must be given by those for whom these work.

Here is another proof of producer insincerity, as I see the matter: they have invited certain regional exhibitor units that are not affiliated either with MPTOA or with Allied States. Representatives of these units are to hold a conference on Monday, October 24, (after this editorial is written). Some of these organizations are supported in the main by dues from affiliated theatres; others are moribund—they have no membership at all, but its leaders retain their offices. Representatives of this latter class will take part, nevertheless, in the Monday conference. The producers are thoroughly familiar with these facts; yet they have invited representatives of these organizations to confer with their own representatives.

What is the motive other than to make the independent exhibitors appear as divided? Can any one of you doubt, then, that the producers lack sincerity, and that, because of it, they will grant no worth-while concessions to the independent exhibitors?

### THE MPTOA CONCESSIONS NO CONCESSIONS

Representatives of MPTOA closed their conferences here last week and departed, with a trade paper announcement that they had agreed with the producers on most points. The facts will, they said, be submitted to their annual national convention, which will be held in Oklahoma City at the end of this month.

Looking over the points of the possible agreement, as have been given in the trade papers from time to time, I find that two of the points on which the independent exhibitor is chiefly interested in have not even been touched upon at all. These are: The right to buy, and separation of theatres from production-distribution. If every concession an exhibitor has ever asked for is granted, unless he gains the right to buy and unless the producers promise to divest themselves of their theatre holdings, the independent exhibitors will have gained nothing worth-while.

The MPTOA leaders will, no doubt, make much trumpet-blowing by announcing that they have gained the right to cancel 20% of the pictures the exhibitor may contract for. I don't know whether you realize it or not, but

(Continued on last page)



### **"Annabel Takes a Tour" with Jack Oakie and Lucille Ball**

(RKO, November 11; time, 67 min.)

This is a good followup to "Affairs of Annabel." As in the first picture, the laughs are provoked by the stunts Jack Oakie pulls in order to get publicity for Lucille Ball, a motion picture actress. Only this time, it is not only Oakie's tricks that get her into trouble, but her own ideas as well. Miss Ball handles the comic part of the actress very well; she is particularly good in the latter half of the picture, after she meets Ralph Forbes, a titled Englishman, and assumes haughty manners. The closing scenes, which border on the slapstick, should provoke hearty laughter:—

Miss Ball urges Bradley Page, production head of the studio, to reengage Oakie as her publicity agent for her personal appearance tour; he agrees to this against his better judgment. Everything goes smoothly until Oakie conceives the idea of linking Miss Ball's name with that of Forbes, a titled Englishman and a well-known author; he arranges an appointment without consulting Forbes, who objected to such publicity stunts. But when Forbes' publisher tells him it would be a good thing for him to have his name linked with Miss Ball's, in order to stimulate the sale of his books, Forbes agrees to go out with her. Miss Ball takes it seriously and decides to give up pictures in order to marry Forbes, much to Page's anger. At a farewell personal appearance at a theatre, Miss Ball says goodbye to her public; to her embarrassment she learns that Forbes was married and the father of four children; in addition, Forbes' wife was trying to serve her with papers in an action for alienation of affections. Oakie saves the day by getting Miss Ball back to Hollywood and away from the lawsuit; she then admits that her place was in pictures.

Joe Bigelow and Bert Granet wrote the story, and Bert Granet and Olive Cooper, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Lou Lusty produced it. In the cast are Ruth Donnelly, Alice White, Pepito, Donald MacBride, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Listen Darling" with Judy Garland, Freddie Bartholomew, Mary Astor and Walter Pidgeon**

(MGM, October 21; time, 74½ min.)

A delightful program comedy, with human appeal; it is not a lavishly produced picture, for most of the action takes place outdoors or in a trailer. Although the story is far-fetched, it is consistently entertaining because of the charming performances and amusing situations and dialogue. And, as an added attraction, Judy Garland sings three songs, which have already become popular. The romance is developed in an appealing way:—

Horried at the idea that her widowed mother (Mary Astor) intended to marry the village banker (Gene Lockhart) in order to provide a home for herself and the two children (Judy Garland and Scotty Beckett), Judy asks her best friend (Freddie Bartholomew) for advice. They decide to "kidnap" Miss Astor and Scotty and take them to the country in the family trailer until such time as Miss Astor would change her mind. At first she is angry, but when she realizes why they had done it she forgives them; but she convinces Freddie that she could not go on alone and had to marry Lockhart. Another idea strikes him—to find a husband who would be liked both by Miss Astor and the children. He meets Walter Pidgeon, a fellow-trailer traveler on the road, and by direct questioning finds out that he could support a family; then he brings him together with Miss Astor. After many complications, during which Freddie finds what he believes to be an even more substantial suitor, things turn out to the satisfaction of all—Miss Astor and Pidgeon fall in love with each other and decide to marry.

Katherine Brush wrote the story, and Elaine Ryan and Anne M. Chapin, the screen play; Edwin L. Marin directed it, and Jack Cummings produced it. In the cast are Alan Hale, Barnett Parker, Charley Grapewin, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Down on the Farm" with Jed Prouty, Spring Byington and Louise Fazenda**

(20th Century-Fox, December 16; time, 61 min.)

This is the most entertaining picture so far produced in the "Jones Family" series. An amusing story, the addition of new characters, and fast action give it wider appeal than the previous ones in this group. There is plentiful comedy, both in characterizations and action; Eddie Collins and Louise Fazenda are particularly good, provoking hearty laughter each time they appear. For a change, the family is moved away from their usual home surroundings to a farm, where excitement reigns when the father is entered in a corn-husking contest:—

When his home is wrecked by bungling firemen, Jed Prouty decides to take his family to his sister's (Louise Fazenda's) farm, while the house was being repaired. Miss Fazenda has her troubles trying to keep her farmhand (Eddie Collins), who had been courting her for fifteen years, away from corn liquor. Prouty and Miss Fazenda decide to hold the annual corn-husking contest on their farm, and to enter Collins as a contestant. But Collins does not care for the strenuous training and purposely injures his thumb; Prouty, who had been a champion in his youth, is compelled to take Collins' place. The news spreads to his home town; his friends decide to nominate him for State Senator, feeling that he would appeal to the farmers. The politicians try to spoil things by kidnapping him; but he manages to escape and to win the contest, to the joy of his family and friends, who had placed bets on him.

Homer Croy, Frank Fenton, and Lynn Root wrote the story, and Robert Ellis and Helen Logan, the screen play; Malcolm St. Claire directed it, and John Stone produced it. In the cast are Russell Gicason, Ken Howell, George Ernest, June Carlson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Service DeLuxe" with Constance Bennett, Charlie Ruggles and Vincent Price**

(Universal, October 21; time, 86 min.)

A fairly good romantic comedy. It offers a somewhat novel plot, with fast action and comical situations. The heartiest laughs are provoked by Mischa Auer, an exiled Russian prince working as a cook for Charlie Ruggles, especially when he starts talking to the spirit of his departed cooking instructor, asking for his advice. The romantic involvements are amusing, too, for, in keeping with the rest of the story, they are handled in a light vein:—

Constance Bennett, owner of a personal service bureau, is tired of running the lives of other persons and longs to meet a man who could make his own decisions. One of her clients assigns to her the unpleasant task of preventing his small-town nephew from visiting him; she meets the nephew (Vincent Price) and, because of his domineering manner, promptly falls in love with him. Realizing, however, that he disliked those who meddled in other persons' affairs, she does not let him know about her business. She brings him together with Ruggles, one of her clients, an eccentric millionaire engineer, without Price suspecting that she had a hand in it. Ruggles is interested in Price's invention for a new type tractor and agrees to finance it; he provides Price with a workshop in his own home. Price is pestered by Joy Hodges, Ruggles' silly man-crazy daughter, but he has eyes for no one but Miss Bennett. When he finally finds out about Miss Bennett, he is so angry that he proposes marriage to Miss Hodges, who joyfully accepts him. But he is unable to go through with the marriage; instead he arranges matters so that Miss Hodges marries Auer, and he and Miss Bennett are reconciled.

Bruce Manning and Vera Casperly wrote the story, and Gertrude Purcell and Leonard Spigelgass, the screen play; Rowland V. Lee directed it, and Edmund Grainger produced it. In the cast are Helen Broderick, Halliwell Hobbes, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### "Suez" with Tyrone Power, Loretta Young and Annabella

(20th Century-Fox, October 28; time, 104 min.)

A very good box-office attraction, mainly because of the drawing power of the stars, the lavish production, and the mechanical ingenuity used in filming two thrilling situations—one of a hurricane and the other of the dynamiting of a mountain. But the story is weak in spots and lacks force; this is due mostly to the fact that Tyrone Power is not quite suitable or believable in the part of the serious dreamer, Ferdinand deLesseps. In addition, many liberties were taken with historical facts in order to build up the romantic angle. There is only one situation that touches the spectator's emotions, and that is when Annabella dies:—

Ferdinand deLesseps and Eugenie deMontijo (Loretta Young) are in love; but Louis Napoleon (Leon Ames), President of France, had noticed her beauty. He, therefore, has deLesseps sent to Egypt, as secretary to the consulate general. DeLesseps pleads with Eugenie to marry him, but she, flattered by Napoleon's attentions, asks for time to consider. DeLesseps arrives in Egypt, where he is greeted by his father (Henry Stephenson), the French Consul, who advises him to try to make friends with Prince Said (J. Edward Bromberg), and in that way win favors for his country. Ferdinand and Toni Pellerin, the impish granddaughter of Sergeant Pellerin, become good friends; she falls madly in love with him, but he cannot forget Eugenie. Ferdinand conceives the idea of a canal connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Encouraged by Mohammed Ali, he goes to Paris for financial backing. He learns that Eugenie had become Napoleon's mistress. Eugenie induces deLesseps to intercede with his father to adjourn the Assembly; she gives him Napoleon's written promise that he would recall them. But Napoleon goes back on his word and, instead, proclaims himself Emperor; the shocks kills deLesseps' father. Discouraged and ashamed, deLesseps gives up his dreams of the Canal. But Toni reinspires him, and Napoleon signs a proclamation financing the work. Things do not go smoothly, however, and the work lags. Eventually deLesseps wins the support of Disraeli and the work is finally completed. But his joy is overshadowed by the fact that Toni had been killed in a hurricane, and Eugenie had married Napoleon.

Sam Duncan wrote the story, and Philip Dunne and Julien Josephson, the screen play; Allan Dwan directed it, and Gene Markey produced it. In the cast are Joseph Schildkraut, Sidney Blackmer, Sig Rumann, Nigel Bruce, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Swing That Cheer" with Robert Wilcox, Tom Brown and Constance Moore

(Universal, October 14; time, 62 min.)

Just another college football picture. There is nothing in it to distinguish it from other football stories, for it follows the routine plot, even to having the hero step into the important game in the last two minutes to play and winning it. Aside from the football scenes, the rest of the picture is taken up with a great deal of talk about football and with the bickering between two college students. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

Robert Wilcox and Tom Brown, roommates, become the two best players on the football team. Wilcox's head is turned by the publicity he receives; he takes all the credit for winning games without realizing that Brown's tackling and guarding were responsible for his making the touchdowns. Constance Moore, Brown's girl friend, writes an editorial in the school paper about it; this annoys Brown and they quarrel and part. Brown changes his room and berates Wilcox for his conceit. They have a quarrel at a cafe one night, and Brown is slightly injured. But, in order to teach Wilcox a lesson, he pretends that his foot hurt him too much to play and so he stays out of the important game. Without Brown, Wilcox is lost. Realizing that his trick

would cost his team the game, Brown rushes into the game in the last two minutes to play, and wins it. He and Wilcox forget their enmity, and Miss Moore and Brown are reconciled.

Thomas Ahearn and F. M. Grossman wrote the story, and Charles Grayson and Lee Loeb; the screen play; Harold Schuster directed it, and Max H. Golden produced it. In the cast are Andy Devine, Samuel Hinds, Raymond Parker, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Road Demon" with Henry Armetta

(20th Century-Fox, December 2; time, 70 min.)

An ordinary program melodrama, with some comedy; it lacks box-office names of value. The plot is routine, offering just fair entertainment in the automobile racing scenes, which are made up mostly of stock shots of races. Henry Armetta and Inez Palange, as his wife, provoke laughter by their excitability. The race in the closing scenes holds one in suspense, due to the efforts of two racers to force the hero, one of the racers, off the track. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

Henry Arthur, a truck driver, has ambitions to become an automobile racer. He meets Joan Valerie, sister of Thomas Beck, a racer, and falls in love with her. When Beck, who had been out drinking the night before, is unable to make a test run, Arthur takes his place. Something goes wrong with the car and he wrecks it. Miss Valerie, who misunderstood Arthur's efforts to help them, refuses to talk to him. Arthur and Armetta, a grocery dealer, buy the wrecked car and fix it up to race it; Arthur was doing this to give Beck his chance. But the villain frames Beck off the track; Arthur takes his place and wins the race. Armetta, who stood to lose if the car won because he had sold too many shares to his relatives, is overjoyed when he learns that his wife had bought back the shares. Miss Valerie realizes that she had misjudged Arthur and asks for forgiveness; they are reconciled.

Robert Ellis and Helen Logan wrote the original screen play; Otto Brower directed it, and Jerry Hottman produced it. In the cast are Bill Robinson, Jonathan Hale, Murray Alper, Lon Chaney, Jr., and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Mr. Wong, Detective" with Boris Karloff

(Monogram, October 5; time, 68 min.)

A good program murder mystery melodrama. It is the first of a series of four pictures Monogram has announced, with Boris Karloff as the Chinese detective, Mr. Wong. Karloff is excellent in the title part; he makes the detective a believable and likeable character. The story is interesting; it holds one in suspense until the very last scene, when the murderer is identified by the detective. The romance and comedy are minimized, which is to the picture's benefit, for in that way the melodramatic action is not interfered with:—

Karloff, well-known Chinese detective, promises to help John Hamilton, a chemical manufacturer, who feared that his life was in danger; but before he could do anything for him, Hamilton is murdered by what Karloff discovers is poison gas. Hamilton's two partners, whom Karloff had at first suspected, meet with the same fate. Investigation leads Karloff and Grant Withers, the police captain working with him, to a gang of international spies who were interested in obtaining the formula for a poison gas held by the chemical firm. Eventually Karloff proves that the murderer was the inventor of the poison gas; he had placed the gas in a glass bulb which exploded by vibration. He had murdered the three men because he felt they were trying to rob him of his share of the profits in the sale of the gas.

Hugh Wiley wrote the story, and Houston Branch, the screen play; William Nigh directed it, and Wm. T. Lackey produced it. In the cast are Maxine Jennings, Evelyn Brent, George Lloyd, Lucien Prival, and John St. Polis.

Because of the murders, suitability, Class B.



establishing the right to cancel 20% of the pictures contracted for will be the worst blow the independent exhibitors could receive. Today, under the 10% cancellation provision, the affiliated theatre can contract for only four major products; under the 20% cancellation provision, it will be able to contract for five major products and still be free of the accusation that it has bought more pictures than it could use.

It is neither the right to cancel a certain number of pictures nor any other provisions that matter much, but the right to buy pictures in the open market, and a market free from wholesalers' competition. It is on these two points that the conferences must stand or fall.

### THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

*(Contributed by an Active Exhibitor)*  
**The Trade Practices Conferences**

At this writing self-regulation sessions have just begun. As an exhibitor, I can but hope that the sessions will be productive of a definite meeting of minds and an immediate correction of abuses of which exhibitors have justly complained for many years.

We fully realize that the distributors did not extend the invitation to confer because of any altruistic motives but merely to stave off complete government supervision in a setup similar to the Federal Communications Commission. Their back is now to that same wall where the handwriting was becoming increasingly visible.

Both national exhibitor bodies, Allied and MPTOA, have definite programs which, in many respects, are quite similar. The other conferring organizations also have programs which are somewhat localized. Put all the programs together, eliminate duplication, and there remains about fifteen reforms, which, if instituted immediately, would make the average exhibitor quite happy.

We have previously expressed the thought that the various exhibitor bodies were not unreasonable in their demands; the reforms they ask are necessary if the independent exhibitor is to find it profitable to remain in business.

A glance at the financial statements of several distributors shows that, despite a recession in this country and dwindling foreign grosses, the distributors' earnings have been maintained at last year's levels! How many exhibitors can boast of anyway near the same record?

The next few weeks will tell whether or not the lion and the lamb are to lie down together or whether they will need a chaperon in the person of Uncle Sam.

### Republic's Contemplated Radio Hour

On several occasions the writer has gone on record as being strongly opposed to pictures' in any way helping to build up radio's listening audience and thereby further opposition. Such an opinion has only mirrored that of thousands of independent exhibitors.

Within a short time a new and even greater cause for complaint, if present plans are consummated, will be given exhibitors. Republic Pictures is readying a radio show of its own! If no sponsor is found it is believed that the program will go on the Columbia Network as a sustaining feature.

Republic, as a producing company, is comparatively young. In the few years of its existence it has made rapid strides. But those advances could not have been made without the active support of the independent exhibitors, to whom it first appealed for support. Though I cannot recall of any Republic salesman saying it, the implication was that "the best defense against the abuses of the major companies is strong independent producers. In helping us you help yourself."

Now that Republic has attained a little stature, it is starting to emulate its bigger brothers and, in so doing, is repeating the practices which were so obnoxious, and upon which Republic got its start.

Before plans for putting the show on the air are completed, the writer believes that it would be advisable to take a lesson from the present day method of influencing legislation and either write or wire Republic Pictures of your objections to their proposed plan of going on the radio.

Inasmuch as the MGM "Good News of 1939" program comes up for renewal in December it might be wise to let them, too, know of your objections.

### Affiliated Circuits Continue Expanding

Last week a Philadelphia exhibitor filed suit against Warner Bros. alleging that Warners, through continued building, have pushed him so far back that he no longer has hopes for any profits.

It is situations like this that caused the government to step in to protect the little fellow. Professor Arnold, in charge of the government's suit, has been insisting that the affiliated circuits cease expansion operations until a court decision has been rendered. He has threatened to enforce his demands with an injunction.

Continued expansion in the face of the government opposition is not only heaping coals on the fire but also is an invitation to disaster. Other trusts have sneered at the government much to their dismay.

(Editor's Note: MGM, too, has been guilty of such a practice; it has just acquired the Criterion, on Broadway, this city.)

### MR. JOSEPH SCHENCK IS RIGHT—BUT

According to Film Daily, Mr. Joseph Schenck, upon reaching the United States from abroad, made the following statement to a reporter of that paper regarding the right to cancel 20% of the pictures contracted for:

"Serious cancellation will cause a lowering of production budgets as it reduces the income. A 20% cancellation which is being asked for by some groups would be extremely serious, and if we cut budgets the quality of product won't be to the exhibitor's expectations. I personally am against cancellation and I don't believe that any company can stand more than 10 per cent."

This paper upholds Mr. Schenck in his opposition to a twenty per cent cancellation. As a matter of fact, this paper believes that the exhibitor should play every picture he contracts for—provided he is given a chance to know what he buys, before signing the contract.



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### HAS THE "MOVIE" CAMPAIGN HELPED THE BOX OFFICE RECEIPTS?

In the last three weeks I have heard much adverse exhibitor criticism against the "Motion Pictures Are Your Best Entertainment" campaign. Some of the critics criticized one feature of the campaign; others other features, while some condemned the campaign in its entirety.

The Movie Quiz contest came in for considerable criticism. Some of the critics went so far as to say that this feature of the campaign will eventually do more harm than good, by reason of the fact that there will undoubtedly be received more than one million correct answers but there will be, they say, only one fifty thousand dollar prize to hand out. Consequently, every one of those who will have sent a correct answer but will have received no prize, either large or small, will feel aggrieved and he and his relatives and friends will become the industry's enemies. Conceding that each such person exerts influence over five other persons, there will be created, they figure out, anywhere from five to ten million enemies.

It seems to me as if all those who have criticized and are still criticizing the movie campaign have overlooked the primary objects for which this campaign was instituted. For several months previously to the starting of the campaign the industry's reputation was at its lowest. Radio commentators took ghoulish delight in maligning the entire industry by telling the public that the producers in Hollywood had lost the public's "touch," that the pictures they were producing lacked merit, that the picture-going public had been fed up with them, and that the motion picture industry was in a tight corner. Exhibitor organizations were telling the industry, by means of paid advertisements, which were afterwards discussed in the daily press as well as over the radio, that a certain number of the stars were box-office "poison." Certain industry leaders were giving to the newspapers interviews telling the American public that Hollywood can no longer make good pictures. The result was that the theatre box offices took a dip that frightened not only exhibitors but the entire industry. Less money was sent to Hollywood for the production of pictures, and those in charge of production began to discharge stars, directors, actors, producers, writers, technicians and others in an effort to fit their budgets to the lowered income. Every one in the industry was in a panic.

At this juncture some one conceived the idea of starting a campaign to offset the malicious propaganda against the industry.

The campaign is now several weeks old and, although its end is still several weeks off, an opportunity is offered to us to render some judgment whether it has or has not benefited the industry in general and the theatre box offices in particular.

But before placing ourselves into a position where we may render a correct judgment, it is necessary that we ask ourselves whether the primary object of the campaign, that is, to stop radio commentators from maligning the industry and to recapture the public's good will, has or has not been accomplished. Let us examine the facts:

The radio commentators no longer treat the industry and motion pictures with the disrespect, not to say the malice, with which they treated it before the campaign—if anything, they are now treating them with respect. Exhibitor organizations no longer buy space in trade papers to tell the industry how "poisonous" to the box office are some stars. Producers no longer give out interviews telling the American public that the quality of the pictures produced today are poor. Hundreds of newspapers have told, and are still telling, the public, through their editorial columns, that the motion picture industry is sound, and that the producers in Hollywood are making highly entertaining pictures; they are congratulating the industry for its efforts to serve the public. So changed has been the sentiment of the newspaper editors toward the industry, in fact, that a recent check-up showed that, out of five hundred editorials that appeared in the newspapers of the nation, more than ninety-five per cent were highly favorable. And additional favorable editorials have been printed since. Can the industry point out to another such record?

All these facts prove conclusively but one thing, that the campaign, as concerns the recapturing of public good will, has been highly successful.

Let us now discuss whether the box offices of the theatres have been helped or not. When thousands of theatres throughout the land use attractive advertisements in the marquees, in the lobbies and on the screens, calling the public's attention to the industry's efforts to give it good picture entertainment; when banners are stretched from one side of the street to the other with the same object in view; when newspaper advertisements appear extolling not any particular pictures but the industry itself; when millions of pieces of literature are mailed to the picture-goers calling their attention to the coming, as well as the current, attractions; when parades are held for the same purpose; when so unprecedented an activity to bring the industry to the attention of the public is resorted to, can any one doubt that the theatre box offices have benefited?

And the campaign is not yet over. In view of the fact that the critics of the movie campaign have been mostly subsequent-run exhibitors, before we can know the results to them we must wait until the campaign is over.

And this is not the only benefit that the industry is going to receive as a result of this campaign; it will benefit also from the improvement in the qual-

(Continued on last page)



### "Men with Wings" with Fred MacMurray, Louise Campbell and Ray Milland

(Paramount, Rel. date not set; time, 105 min.)

Technically this picture is very good, but that is as far as it gets, for it is completely lacking in human appeal, at no time touching the spectator's emotions. The technicolor photography is impressive, particularly in the out-door scenes of aerial combats, and of regular flights. And it gives an accurate account of the growth in America of aviation, from its very inception, which may prove interesting to aviation enthusiasts. But the picture leaves one cold, for several reasons: first, the hero is an unsympathetic character, whose restlessness leads him away from his home and duty to his family in search of adventure; secondly, the story lacks dramatic force and unfolds in so leisurely a manner that one loses interest in the characters themselves. This is no fault of the actors, whose performances are good; it is just that the material is weak:—

Louise Campbell, whose father, a pioneer aviation enthusiast, had met with death in one of the first planes designed, does not lose her enthusiasm for flying. Her two pals (Fred MacMurray and Ray Milland) from childhood days feel the same way about aviation as she does; as a matter of fact, in the year 1914, they design and build a plane that revolutionizes the industry. On the strength of it they become associated with an aeroplane manufacturer. But staying on the ground does not appeal to MacMurray and so he goes to France to fight in the war. Miss Campbell follows him there and marries him; this hurts Milland, who loved her. They return to America, but MacMurray is still restless. On the night that his baby is born he signs up to fight in Morocco; ever-faithful Milland stands by Miss Campbell. MacMurray returns and for a time everything goes well; he and Milland start an aeroplane factory, which makes them both wealthy. But when the depression sets in and things go bad, MacMurray goes off again, this time to China. Milland designs a new type bomber, which is approved by the U. S. Army and which brings him fame and fortune; Miss Campbell is ever by his side. In the year 1938 MacMurray, who had gone off to another war, is killed. This brings Milland and Miss Campbell together.

Robert Carson wrote the screen play, and William A. Wellman directed and produced it. In the cast are Andy Devine, Porter Hall, Walter Abel, Kitty Kelly, James Burke, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Shadows over Shanghai" with James Dunn, Ralph Morgan and Linda Gray

(Grand National, October 14; time, 64½ min.)

Fairly good program entertainment, with special appeal to followers of action melodramas. In spite of the fact that the story is far-fetched, it holds one in suspense because of the constant danger to the hero and the heroine. Several stock and newsreel shots of war scenes are used to good advantage, adding to the excitement in some of the situations. The love interest is pleasant. Shanghai is the background:—

After her brother, an aviator, had been shot down and wounded, Linda Gray agrees to take over his job of delivering an amulet to agents in San Francisco; this amulet would release a \$5,000,000 fund which was to be used for the purchase of ammunition for China. Miss Gray is followed by Robert Barrat, a Russian, who wanted to get hold of the amulet in order to obtain the money for himself; another one trying to get the amulet was Paul Sutton, a Japanese war lord. Miss Gray goes to see Ralph Morgan, as her brother had suggested; at Morgan's apartment she meets James Dunn, a newsreel cameraman stationed in Shanghai. The two men promise to help her. Morgan suggests that Dunn marry Miss Gray in order to make it easier for her to get into the United States; they follow his suggestion. Their lives are endangered on several occasions; eventually Barrat is killed by an explosive intended for Miss Gray. They finally realize that their efforts had been in vain for the United States had placed an embargo on munitions intended for countries at war. Having fallen in love with each other, Miss Gray and Dunn decide to stay married, and leave for the United States.

Richard B. Sale wrote the story, and Joseph Hoffman, the screen play; Charles Lamont directed it, and Franklyn Warner produced it. In the cast are Edward Woods, Edwin Mordant, Victor Wong, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Dangerous Secret" with Paul Lukas, Hugh Williams and Linden Travers

(Grand National, Sept. release; time, 58½ min.)

This British-made triangle drama is fairly good adult entertainment, despite a routine story; the performances by the three leading players are outstanding. Its one drawback for the American theatres is the fact that, outside of Paul Lukas, the players are not well known here. It should find favor mostly with women because of the romantic involvements; the action is too slow for general appeal. Some of the situations are pretty sexy, particularly towards the end; but these have been handled intelligently and are not too offensive:—

Hugh Williams and Linden Travers meet in a London restaurant. After spending the night together they realize that they loved each other; but they are compelled to part since Williams had to leave for India. The telegram he sends her from India, asking her to join him so that they might be married, goes astray. When he returns five years later he finds Miss Travers married to a college professor (Lukas), who was much older than she was. They find that they still loved each other; but Miss Travers feels that she could not betray Lukas, who adored her. Lukas, through the accusations of his housekeeper, who was mad with jealousy, finally understands the situation. Nevertheless he berates the housekeeper for talking against his wife and orders her out of the house. Realizing the nobleness of Lukas' character, the lovers decide to forget each other; Williams goes away, and husband and wife are reconciled.

Basil Mason wrote the screen play, Edmond Greville directed it, and Hugh Perceval produced it. In the cast are Marie Ney, Renee Gadd, and others.

**"The title is  
DANGEROUS  
SECRETS**

Not suitable for children. Class B.

### "The Citadel" with Robert Donat and Rosalind Russell

(MGM, October 28; time, 112 min.)

A straightforward and at times stirring drama centering around the medical profession in England; it shows both sides—that of the struggling young idealist, and of the unethical practitioner. As entertainment, its appeal, however, will be directed mostly to class audiences rather than to the masses, for several reasons; first, because of the nature of the story and of the rather sombre and at times depressing atmosphere, and, secondly, because of the heavy accents. It may, however, do pretty well in big cities, because of the popularity of the novel from which the plot was adapted. The picture it shows of fee-splitting doctors is not a pleasant one, even though the practice itself may be considered ethical amongst doctors; the fact that the hero becomes a party to such a practice lessens the feeling of sympathy that the spectator had for him up until that point. Certain changes were made in the story, such as substituting the death of a friend for the wife. No doubt the change was made as a concession to the masses; nevertheless, it weakens the story from a dramatic standpoint:—

Robert Donat is appointed community doctor of a Welsh mining town; he takes his work seriously, even to refusing to carry on an old practice of issuing false certificates to miners so that they might receive wages while pretending to be ill and not working. This antagonizes some of the miners. Donat carries on research work in tuberculosis, using the coal mine dust as the basis for his studies. But the superstition and antagonism on the part of the doctors and ignorant miners disgust him, and so he and his wife (Rosalind Russell) leave for London. But again Donat is disappointed—no patients, no practice, and no money. One day he meets an old school friend (Rex Harrison), who had become a wealthy society doctor. He introduces him to other doctors, who carry on the unethical practice of splitting fees obtained from wealthy patients. Donat becomes one of them, despite his wife's objections, and in a short time he becomes wealthy. But the death of his best friend (Ralph Richardson) at the hands of one of his incompetent fee-splitting friends makes him realize how he had degenerated. He gives up everything and joins an unlicensed but highly competent man in tuberculosis work; he permits this man to operate on the young daughter of a friend. The girl is saved; nevertheless, the medical association brings a charge against him for working with an unlicensed surgeon. He pleads his case eloquently, but leaves with his wife without waiting for a verdict.

The plot was adapted from the novel by A. J. Cronin; Ian Dalrymple, Frank Wead and Elizabeth Hill wrote the screen play; King Vidor directed it and Victor Saville produced it. In the cast are Emlyn Williams, Penelope Peckley Ward, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Angels with Dirty Faces" with  
James Cagney, Pat O'Brien  
and Ann Sheridan**

(First National, November 19; time, 97 min.)

A powerful gangster melodrama. Although it is not very different in story content from other pictures of its type, it is unusual in other respects—the acting, particularly by James Cagney, is brilliant, the comedy involving the "Dead End" boys with Cagney is at times hilariously comical, the action is fact and extremely exciting; and to top it off, there are situations that have strong emotional appeal. All these things combined go to make up one of the most thrilling pictures produced in some time. The closing scenes are so strong that they leave one with a choked-up feeling, making it difficult for one to restrain the tears. Cagney's actions throughout are, of course, pretty demoralizing; but since he pays for his misdeeds in the end, it brings out its point that crime does not pay. The romance is of slight importance:—

Two boys grow up in the same slum neighborhood—one (Pat O'Brien) becomes a priest, and the other (Cagney) a gangster. Cagney, after serving a three year prison term, returns to his old neighborhood; O'Brien welcomes him. Cagney becomes acquainted with six tough boys in the neighborhood, who try to steal his wallet; when he tells them who he was, they express their admiration for him and ask him to teach them some of his tricks. They learn to idolize him. Cagney visits his former lawyer (Humphrey Bogart), who was holding \$100,000 belonging to him. Bogart had formed a racketeering partnership with George Bancroft; he tries to have Cagney killed by his henchmen, but Cagney outwits them, and forces Bogart to turn the money over to him. He uses one of the young boys of the gang to help him out, and then gives the boys a large sum of money to divide amongst themselves. O'Brien, realizing how harmful Cagney's influence could be to the boys, starts a radio and newspaper campaign to rid the city of racketeers. Bancroft decides to kill O'Brien, to which Cagney objects. A quarrel follows and Cagney kills both Bogart and Bancroft; pursued by the police, he locks himself in a warehouse and starts shooting, killing policemen. O'Brien finally goes into the building and convinces Cagney that he should give himself up. Cagney is tried and sentenced to die by the electric chair. O'Brien pleads with him to pretend to turn yellow as he enters the death chamber, in order to make the boys think less of him. He refuses, but at the last minute does as O'Brien asked; the newspaper accounts of his actions have the effect on the boys that O'Brien hoped it would have.

Rowland Brown wrote the story, and John Wexley and Warren Duff, the screen play; Michael Curtiz directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are Joe Downing, Edward Pawley, and others.

Unsuitable for children; adult fare. Class B.

**"I Stand Accused" with Robert Cummings  
and Helen Mack**

(Republic, October 28; time, 63 min.)

This racketeer melodrama, revolving around a young lawyer who becomes mixed up with the leaders of the gang, is fairly good program entertainment; it holds one's attention throughout. Up until almost the closing scenes, the actions of the hero are such as to make the spectator feel antagonistically towards him; but in the end, when he risks his own life to see that justice is done, one feels some sympathy for him. The production, direction, and acting are good:—

Upon graduating from law school, Robert Cummings and Thomas Beck form a partnership. Beck was an idealist who refused to handle any crooked cases or represent shady characters; after a few months in business the partners find themselves in a bankrupt state. Cummings becomes acquainted with Lyle Talbot, gunman for a noted racketeer; he represents him in a criminal charge and handles the case so well that he wins his freedom. Beck disapproves of the whole thing, and in a short time breaks the partnership to join the District Attorney's office as special prosecutor in crime actions. In the meantime, Cummings develops a lucrative practice representing racketeers. His wife (Helen Mack) is not pleased with the work he was doing and so tells him; they quarrel and part. Beck starts a drive against crime in the city. Cummings eventually regrets his part in the crime wave and sends Beck evidence that would help him win his case against the criminals; but Beck, knowing that Cummings would be involved, burns the evidence. Cummings insists, therefore, on taking the stand and telling all. He then aids the police in arresting Talbot, who, in addition to his many murders,

had killed his leader. Cummings is shot doing this, but he recovers; he and his wife are reconciled, and the old partnership is revived.

Gordon Kahn wrote the original screen play, and John H. Auer produced and directed it. In the cast are Gordon Jones, Robert Paige, Leona Roberts, Robert Middlemass, Thomas E. Jackson and others.

Not suitable for children; adult fare. Class B.

**"Tarnished Angel" with Sally Eilers  
and Lee Bowman**

(RKO, October 28; time, 68 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining program drama. The story is far-fetched and lacks dramatic power. A similar idea, that of a young woman making a racket out of evangelism, was used in Columbia's "Miracle Woman," produced in 1931; but that is as far as the comparison goes for as powerful and believable as was "Miracle Woman" so weak and unbelievable is this picture. Part of the fault is due to the screen play and part to the unconvincing performances. One is not in sympathy with the heroine for, up until the very end, her actions are unprincipled. The romance is kept in the background:—

Sally Eilers, a hostess at a clip joint, outwits the police during a raid; the police inspector (Jonathan Hale) is determined to get something on her. He makes it impossible for her to get a position at another night club, and so, in company with her two friends (Ann Miller and Paul Guilfoyle) she leaves town; but Hale follows them. Miss Eilers decides to become an evangelist in order to make easy money by means of collections. But things don't work out as well as she had expected and so she calls in a crook she had known in New York, to help her work out a scheme to make more money. Alma Kruger, a wealthy woman who had taken an interest in Miss Eilers, is chosen as the victim; she had in her possession a valuable diamond necklace that they had decided to steal. But Miss Eilers undergoes a change of heart and cannot go through with the theft; her work as an evangelist and the faith of her followers had regenerated her. Knowing how she felt, Guilfoyle outwits the crook, who is arrested by Hale. Hale, realizing that Miss Eilers had really reformed, informs her that she was free. Miss Eilers is grateful, and is happy when Lee Bowman, who loved her, arrives to help her.

Saul Elkins wrote the story, and Jo Pagano, the screen play; Leslie Goodwins directed it, and B. P. Fineman produced it. In the cast are Jack Arnold and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.

**"The Storm" with Charles Bickford,  
Tom Brown, Preston Foster  
and Nan Grey**

(Universal, October 28; time, 76 min.)

A fair program melodrama. It has a few exciting moments in which the spectator is held in tense suspense; but for the main part the plot is developed according to formula. The performances by the leading players are its chief asset; they are able to give dramatic value to somewhat ordinary situations. A scene that is supposed to be one of the highlights of the picture, where a nurse operates on a man at sea from instructions sent to her over the radio by a doctor, was already used in "King of Alcatraz," recently released. The romance is appealing:—

Charles Bickford, ship wireless operator, is determined that his younger brother (Tom Brown) should not follow in his footsteps. But Brown, who had always idolized Bickford, disregards his brother's orders and studies for the same profession. Bickford had a grudge against Barton MacLane, a Captain; he blamed him for the death of his friend (Preston Foster), a wireless operator, who had gone down with the sinking ship MacLane had commanded, for MacLane had made no attempt to save him. Despondent when he sees his old ship and the crew blown up in an explosion, Bickford decides to take a desk job. But he changes his mind when he learns that his brother had signed up as a wireless operator on MacLane's new ship and was taking with him Nan Grey, whom he intended to marry; because of a joke Miss Grey had played on him, Bickford thought she was not respectable. But he changes his mind about her when, during a storm, she is forced to operate on Brown from radio instructions by a doctor. Brown recovers and marries Miss Grey. While at the wedding celebration at a cafe, Bickford sees MacLane; he challenges him to a fight and gives him a good beating.

Daniel Moore and Hugh King wrote the story, and they and Theodore Reeves, the screen play; Harold Young directed it and Ken Goldsmith produced it. In the cast are Andy Devine, Frank Jenks, Samuel Hinds, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



ity of the pictures, for the producers have been put on their mettle as a result of it.

There is no question that mistakes have been made. The "Movie Quiz" is, in my opinion, one of them. Personally I feel that, if the \$250,000 that have been appropriated for the prizes of this contest had been spent in newspaper advertisements, the industry would have benefited to a much greater extent. But even these deductions are a matter of opinion; the results of this contest will not be known until after the prizes have been handed out.

If mistakes have been made, the exhibitor must remember that the need for starting this campaign was so pressing that no time could be lost in discussing all phases of it thoroughly. I am sure that those who are in charge of it will profit by these mistakes and will avoid them in future campaigns of this kind.

Next year it will be fifty years since the motion picture was invented, and HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that the industry will not overlook the opportunity this occasion offers for gaining still more public good will and for helping the box offices to a still greater degree. The industry leaders should, therefore, begin laying down plans for a celebration right now. In this manner they will give a chance to those whom they will place in charge of the campaign to avoid errors and to obtain much better results.

### PHILADELPHIA BREAKS THE SHACKLES

On Friday last week more than one hundred independent theatre owners, representing between one hundred and fifty and one hundred and sixty theatres of the Philadelphia zone, met in Philadelphia to hear Col. A. H. Cole, of Texas, member of the Allied States Association board of directors, speak on organization. The arrangement for hearing Col. Cole was made by a few Philadelphia zone exhibitors at Atlantic City two weeks ago, while attending the New Jersey exhibitors' annual convention.

For a long time United Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Eastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey & Delaware has been disorganized on account of a personal feud between Lewen Pizor, its President, and Dave Milgram, an exhibitor, member of that organization, engendered by competitive acts. Many exhibitors, friends of Mr. Pizor, advised him to resign the Presidency for the good of the organization, but he would not take their advice. As a result, the influence of that body, powerful once, has sunk to the lowest level that it could possibly sink.

Many exhibitors felt that Mr. Pizor was trying to perpetuate himself in office, and this idea brought further resentment.

Since the organization there ceased functioning, many exhibitors felt that a new organization should be formed to bar as officers all those who might prove a detriment to it. It was while they were looking around for a start that these exhibitors approached Col. Cole for guidance.

Col. Cole advised the Philadelphia gathering that two things are needed to make an organization successful, loyal membership and the unfailing payment of dues. Every one of the exhibitors present assured him that they will do both.

A committee was appointed to apply for an Allied charter and to effect the organization.

It was only a few weeks ago that this paper, having been informed of conditions there, urged Allied States to send a representative to Philadelphia to organize the exhibitors under its banner.

\* \* \*

Since we are talking about the benefits of a well conducted exhibitor organization, it might not be amiss for us to talk about those exhibitor units that are not affiliated with a national organization. The present producer-exhibitor conferences have proved conclusively that units of this kind do more harm to the exhibitor cause than good, by reason of the fact that, first, they do not add their own strength to that of the national body, and the producers are using them as a means to discourage the national organization for obtaining the most concessions possible. Besides, the problems taken up at these conferences were national in nature. And no local unit, unaffiliated with a national body, could undertake the solution of national problems successfully.

It is too commonplace to cite to them the Aesopian parable about the farmer who pointed out to his sons, by means of a bundle of sticks, that the sticks could be broken one at a time but not as a bundle, and by inference how much stronger these units would be were they to join a national organization. The only question they should decide should be, which national organization to join. That should not be so difficult a problem for them to solve: let them find out how each organization subsists. If it subsists with producer money, it must comply with the wishes of the producers, for if it does not do so the monthly or yearly allowance would naturally cease. Let each exhibitor remember that the person who pays the check every Saturday is the boss.

Since Allied is the only national organization that does not accept a bounty from the producers, then each unaffiliated unit should join that organization. If it has defects, let them point them out and fight for their correction from within the ranks.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that every member of an unattached exhibitor organization unit will urge the officers of his organization to apply for an Allied charter without delay.

### ABOUT UNITED ARTISTS PICTURES

Some exhibitors have complained to this office that United Artists is not delivering to them "Algiers," which features Charles Boyer, although they have under their contract "The Illusionist," which was promised to them with Charles Boyer.

Morally they are right; they bought a Charles Boyer picture and United Artists now refuses to deliver it to them. But from the legal point of view, they cannot compel it to deliver "Algiers," by reason of the fact that, first, it is not described in their contract, and secondly the synopsis in the work sheet, which the distributor considers as no part of the contract, is entirely different from the story of the picture; there is no relation between the two.

In reference to "Blockade," the story bears a great similarity to the description in "A Kiss in Paris." Consequently, no exhibitor can legally refuse to accept "Blockade."

"Drums" and "Mutiny in the Mountains" seem to be the same story.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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### CRUDE!

Donahue & Co., Inc., which is an advertising agency with headquarters at Rockefeller Center, is handling the advertising for the "Motion Pictures Are Your Best Entertainment" campaign. It is this agency that selects the newspapers to advertise in, communicates with them, and hands out the advertising.

About the end of September, an official of this company wrote to the advertising manager of a small-town newspaper the following letter:

"This week we are releasing additional advertising in connection with the Motion Picture Industry campaign. Proofs of typical current ads are attached.

"Unfortunately, our client has instructed us not to run any further advertising in your paper because of the fact that there is no local theatre in your community cooperating with the campaign.

"Consequently there is no way in which any of the readers of your paper can obtain Movie Quiz Booklets locally. Accordingly, it must be obvious to you that the advertising which we released for publication in September in your community was, to a substantial degree, wasted.

"It has occurred to us that you might be able to influence one or more of your local theatres to cooperate with the industry campaign, in order that Movie Quiz booklets might be available locally, thus making it possible for us to continue that campaign in your paper.

"All local theatres can obtain complete details regarding the Industry advertising campaign from whatever Film exchange they normally do business with."

This letter does not seem to be the only one sent out by Donahue & Co., Inc.; there must have been many others, if I am to judge by the fact that I have received information to the effect that also a newspaper in another state has received a similar letter.

When the producers approached the Postmaster General for an approval of the Movie Quiz Contest, the approval was given, as I have been informed, upon the understanding that every theatre owner, irrespective of whether he subscribed to the campaign or not, would receive the Movie Quiz pamphlets. It was only thus that the campaign could be considered as not offending the post office regulations regarding lotteries. But this smart "client" seems to have overlooked this part of the arrangement.

I don't know who this "client" the Donahue & Co., Inc., official refers to is, but if this official had started out to enrage the newspaper publishers he

could not have done it more effectively, for they are a proud class of people and, although for the time being they may capitulate so as not to lose advertising, they don't forget so easily.

Those who have received such "threatening" letters are not the only ones who will bear resentment against the motion picture industry for this crude method of compelling newspaper publishers and advertising managers to become salesmen for the "Motion Pictures Are Your Best Entertainment" campaign; most others will feel the same resentment, for they will be informed of this high-handed method through the confidential organs that circulate only among newspaper employers and important employees. The newspaper people are organized very closely, and an offense to one is usually an offense to all the others.

HARRISON'S REPORTS calls upon the producers to find out who this "client" is so as to compel him to stop sending to the newspapers letters of this kind.

### A LOSS BY THE ALLIED EXHIBITORS

It was announced last week that Mr. H. M. Richey, formerly business manager of Allied Theatre Owners of Michigan, and for the last few months connected with Cooperative Theatres, of Detroit, Michigan, has been appointed by Mr. George Schaefer, President of RKO, as director of exhibitor relations for that company.

His duties will be, no doubt, to smooth out and adjust any differences that might arise between exhibitors and RKO.

It is too bad that Allied States let Mr. Richey get away from it, for he is one of the finest organizers the exhibitors have ever had. Without meaning to deprecate the hard work the business managers, secretaries, presidents and the officers of other exhibitor organizations have done to build up their organizations, I can say that the work Mr. Richey did for the organized exhibitors of Michigan will stand as a monument.

It was said by Col. Cole at the recent gathering of the Philadelphia exhibitors that a successful organization needs for success loyal membership and unfailing payment of dues. Mr. Richey, while in charge of the Michigan organization, was able to attain both: not only was his membership the greatest ever known in the history of that state, but also the treasury of the organization had the most money. At no time did the treasury run short of funds.

Mr. Richey always was an asset to national Allied, particularly in the first years after its birth. Whenever money was needed to carry on some

(Continued on last page)



**"Submarine Patrol" with Richard Greene,  
Preston Foster and Nancy Kelly**

(20th Century-Fox, November 25; time, 94 min.)

Very good! It touches upon a branch of the naval service used during the war that should be of interest to the masses—that of the "splinter fleet," small wooden torpedo ships used as submarine patrols for ocean-going liners; it is a new subject as far as war pictures go. It combines thrills with unusually good comedy and a delightful romance. One particular situation is so brilliantly directed that spectators will remember it for a long time—it shows one of the small submarine chasers, commanded by Preston Foster, going after a German submarine that was known to be the most dangerous of all. By silently gliding through the mine zone during a heavy mist, they find the submarine base without making their presence known; but they are soon spied. After terrific fighting, they are successful in sinking the submarine. Another thrilling situation is that in which the same submarine chaser locates and sinks a submarine that was menacing a ship on its way to Europe with supplies for the Allies. The tension is relieved by extremely comical dialogue that takes place between the men quartered on the small chaser.

In the development of the plot, Richard Greene, one of the crew, meets and falls in love with Nancy Kelly; but her father (George Bancroft), Captain of a transport liner is against the match, for he did not trust Greene, who was wealthy. Bancroft thwarts their attempts to get married. Eventually he realizes how unjust he had been and goes to see Greene on his ship; Greene, mistaking his intentions, knocks him out; in the meantime the ship sets sail on a dangerous mission. When Bancroft is revived, he offers to help and is instrumental in saving the ship and the crew. Once back at the station, Bancroft plans an elaborate marriage for Miss Kelly and Greene; but again their plans are upset for Greene had been ordered to sail immediately. The two ships pass and the lovers send signals declaring their love for each other.

Ray Milholland wrote the story, and Rian James, Darrell Ware, and Jack Yellen, the screen play; John Ford directed it, and Gene Markey produced it. In the cast are Slim Summerville, John Carradine, Henry Armetta, Warren Hymer, Douglas Fowley, J. Farrell MacDonald, Maxie Rosenbloom, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Lawless Valley" with George O'Brien  
and Kay Sutton**

(RKO, November 4; time, 58½ min.)

A good outdoor melodrama. Although the story is routine, it should appeal to the western fans for it has fast action, thrilling horseback riding, and exciting fist fights, in addition to comedy and romance. The hero's efforts to prove the innocence of himself and his father on a framed charge keeps the spectator interested throughout, particularly since one is in sympathy with the hero, who shows courage in the face of danger:—

Released from prison on a parole after having served a year for holding up a stagecoach, George O'Brien goes back to his home town in an effort to prove that he and his father had been framed and that his father had not committed suicide but had been murdered. On the road he meets Walter Miller, a fellow hobo, and they become friends; Miller accompanies O'Brien to the ranch of his only friend. No sooner is O'Brien back than he is warned by Fred Kohler and his son that he was not wanted there; but O'Brien knew that Kohler was trying to force his ward (Kay Sutton) to marry his son, even though she loved O'Brien, and so he warns Kohler to leave him alone. Helped by Miller, O'Brien finally gets the proof he needed—that Kohler and his son had committed the robbery and had murdered his father. It develops that Miller was a federal officer, and he takes charge of the case. His name cleared, O'Brien is free to marry Miss Sutton.

W. C. Tuttle wrote the story, and Oliver Drake, the screen play; David Howard directed it, and Bert Gilroy produced it. In the cast are Fred Kohler, Jr., Lew Kelly, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Mars Attacks the World" with  
Larry (Buster) Crabbe and Jean Rogers**

(Universal Special; running time, 67½ min.)

This picture is a condensation of "Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars," the Universal serial; it has been put out by Universal in feature form to take advantage of the recent radio panic that the Orson Welles radio broadcast had caused among thousands of people in this country.

It is a fantastic story, in which the hero is shown entering a rocket on the earth and flying to the planet Mars to prevent the destruction of the earth by a would-be scientist with nitron rays. All kinds of weird things happen in that planet: human beings walk on rays of light that act as solid bridges, queer-looking aeroplanes fly around spreading destruction, and many other similar happenings. The ruler of Mars is a woman (heroine), who possesses extraordinary powers, even to the extent of condemning people to spending their lives within a coat of clay; but the villain schemes to depose her and thus becoming the absolute ruler, with the object of carrying out his plans of destroying the earth. But his plans, of course, are upset by the arrival of the hero from the earth. Once his mission is accomplished the hero and his aides return to earth in the rocket they had used originally.

Though the story is, as said, fantastic, it has been produced so well that it produces realism. There are many thrilling situations, caused by the struggle of the hero to overpower the villain so as to prevent him from destroying the earth. But whether the majority of picture-goers will accept it seriously it is hard to tell; perhaps those who have shown it in their theatres as a serial will have formed an idea.

The original story was based on Alex Raymond's newspaper strip, "Flash Gordon," syndicated by King Features, Inc. The picture was directed by Ford Beebe and Robert Hill. The supporting cast consists of Charles Middleton, Frank Shannon, Beatrice Roberts, Donald Kerr, Montague Shaw, Richard Alexander, Wheeler Oakman, Kane Richmond and Kenneth Duncan.

Children should enjoy it immensely. An excellent Saturday picture for small towns. Suitability, Class A.

**"Illegal Traffic" with J. Carrol Naish,  
Mary Carlisle and Robert Preston**

(Paramount, November 4; time, 67 min.)

A good program gangster melodrama. Although the story is developed according to formula and one knows just how it will end, the action is so fast and exciting that it holds one in tense suspense throughout. The real thrills are concentrated in the second half, after it is established that the hero was a federal investigator and not a member of the gang. The method employed by the hero to capture the gangster leader is both novel and thrilling. A pleasant romance is worked into the plot in a logical way, without interfering with the action:—

J. Carrol Naish, gangster leader, is the head of an outfit that furnished, for a large sum of money, transportation out of the country to criminals wanted by the police. He does not hesitate to kill any one who stands in his way. Robert Preston, an aviator who had at one time barnstormed with Regis Toomey, one of Naish's aviators, is accepted into the gang. He shows courage in the face of danger, which pleases Naish. Preston meets and falls in love with Mary Carlisle, daughter of an innkeeper whose place was used as a stop-off by the criminals; she is unaware of the nature of Naish's business and does not realize that her father was connected with him. Naish eventually finds out that Preston was a federal investigator and plans to kill him; but Preston, although wounded by a gun shot from Naish, pilots a plane in order to give chase to Naish, who was trying to escape in an automobile; he is compelled to kill Naish when he rushes out of the car. The gang is rounded up. Preston and Miss Carlisle plan to marry.

Robert Yost, Lewis Foster, and Stuart Anthony wrote the story and screen play; Louis King directed it, and William C. Thomas produced it. In the cast are Judith Barrett, Pierre Watkin, Larry Crabbe, George McKay, and others.

Not for children; adult fare. Class B.



### **"Torchy Gets Her Man" with Glenda Farrell and Barton MacLane**

(Warner Bros., November 12; time, 62 min.)

A good program melodrama. Of the pictures so far produced in this series, this one is the most exciting. The story is developed in a logical way, the action is fast and at times thrilling, and the tension is relieved by good comedy bits. Particularly thrilling are the closing scenes, where the heroine is trapped by the gangsters:

Glenda Farrell, newspaper reporter, is annoyed when her fiance, a police inspector (Barton MacLane) refuses to give her information about a case he was working on. By investigating on her own, she discovers that he was working with a federal officer (Willard Robertson) to track down a noted counterfeiter. Her snooping leads her to the hideout, where she is caught; to her surprise she finds that Robertson was not a federal officer but the counterfeiter himself. MacLane, who had begun to suspect Robertson, arrives in time to save Miss Farrell and to round up the gang.

Albert DeMond wrote the original screen play, William Beaudine directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Tom Kennedy, George Guhl, Thomas Jackson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"The Young in Heart" with Janet Gaynor and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.**

(United Artists, October 27; time, 90 min.)

Very good! It is a deeply appealing comedy-drama, with a heartwarming, sentimental quality, excellent comedy bits, and two appealing romances. The production is lavish, and the direction and acting most impressive; as a matter of fact, each one of the players gives a superb performance. There are scenes that touch one's heart and even bring tears to the eyes, without being maudlin. The pleasant part of it is that the story is developed naturally and with simplicity. The eventual regeneration of a family of four, who had lived by their wits, through their love for an elderly woman, is inspiring:—

Roland Young, his wife (Billie Burke), and their two children (Janet Gaynor and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.) live by their wits; Young even cheats at cards. Just as they were about to consummate a lucrative marriage for their son, they are informed by the police to leave town. On the train to London, Miss Gaynor becomes acquainted with a charming elderly woman (Minnic Dupree), who invites her and her family into her private compartment; she orders dinner for them. They save her life when the train is wrecked; she, being lonesome, pleads with them to stay at her home, and they, being broke, gladly accept. Once there, they decide to ingratiate themselves into her affections so that she would make them her heirs. In order to impress her, Young and Fairbanks obtain positions. As time goes on, they find that they enjoy honest work. Fairbanks falls in love with Paulette Goddard, who worked in his office. Miss Dupree becomes ill; her lawyer (Henry Stephenson), who knew all about the family, tells them she had made a will leaving everything to them, but that the joke was on them for, unknown to Miss Dupree, her holdings were worthless. The family, heartbroken because of Miss Dupree's illness, inform Stephenson that they did not want any money, and also that, if Miss Dupree should survive, she could make her home with them. She becomes better and goes to live with her four friends; Roland's job develops into an important one, Fairbanks marries Miss Goddard, and Miss Gaynor marries Richard Carlson, a righteous young Scotchman, who had at first disapproved of her family.

The plot was adapted from the story by I. A. R. Wylie; Paul Osborn wrote the screen play, Richard Wallace directed it, and David O. Selznick produced it. Others in the cast are Irvin S. Cobb, Lucile Watson and Margaret Early.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Just Around the Corner" with Shirley Temple, Charles Farrell and Joan Davis**

(20th Century-Fox, November 11; time, 69½ min.)

Good for the Shirley Temple fans, particularly the younger ones. She is as delightful as ever, singing and dancing in her usual competent manner; one tune she sings is quite catchy and should become popular. The story in itself is simple yet appealing; a few of the situations are, however, so far-fetched that adults might become somewhat impatient. Joan Davis and Bert Lahr are in for a brief spell, provoking laughter by their antics; and Franklin Pangborn, as a harrassed hotel manager, adds to the gaiety. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

When motherless Shirley is compelled to leave the fashionable school she was attending to return home to her father, she is happy. Even when she learns that her father, an architect (Charles Farrell), had met with financial reverses and was compelled to move from the penthouse apartment down to the basement, she does not mind, for she loved being with him. In answer to a question that she puts to him, Farrell explains that things were bad because "Uncle Sam," meaning the United States Government, was being harrassed on all sides, that he needed help, and that if he got it things would pick up. Shirley, thinking that by "Uncle Sam" Farrell meant Claude Gillingwater, a banker, with whose nephew (Bennie Bartlett) she had become good friends, decides to help him. She gives a benefit performance for "Uncle Sam," collecting nickels for the admission fee; she then turns all the money over to Gillingwater. At first he thinks the whole thing was a trick to belittle him in the public's eye; but when he learns the truth he is touched. He decides to reopen factories he had closed, and also to finance Farrell in his dream of a new building project. Farrell and Amanda Duff, Gillingwater's niece, plan to marry.

Paul Gerard Smith wrote the story, and Ethel Hill, J. P. McEvoy, and Darrell Ware, the screen play; Irving Cummings directed it, and David Hempstead produced it. In the cast are Bill Robinson, Cora Witherspoon, Hal K. Dawson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Gangster's Boy" with Jackie Cooper and Robert Warwick**

(Monogram, November 9; time, 80 min.)

On the strength of the title and Jackie Cooper's popularity this should do good business. It has human appeal and some comedy. The most agreeable thing about it is Jackie Cooper's performance; he plays a difficult part with ease, winning and holding the spectator's sympathy throughout. The casting of Robert Warwick as a reformed gangster is faulty; he overacts the part to such an extent that at times he appears ridiculous. Considering the good business that "Boy of the Streets" did it is possible that this may duplicate its success at the box-office:—

Jackie, the most brilliant and popular boy in school, is overjoyed when his father (Warwick) returns home after a long absence. But a snooping newspaper reporter brings sorrow to the family when he prints the story of Warwick's career as a racketeer; he does not say anything about Warwick's having reformed. His schoolmates, with the exception of two friends, a brother and a sister, shun him. Jackie, knowing that the father of these two friends, a Judge, objected to his father and was trying to force him out of the town, asks them not to see him. But they insist on being with him, and leave together after a dance in Jackie's new automobile; the brother drives the car and meets with an accident in which a young man is injured. Jackie sends them home and takes the blame himself; he refuses to talk. Eventually the truth comes out and Jackie is praised by all for his courage. The Judge apologizes and welcomes Jackie's father to the community.

Karl Brown and Robert D. Andrews wrote the story, and Mr. Andrews, the screen play; William Nigh directed it, and William Lackey produced it. In the cast are Lucy Gilman, Louise Lorimer, Tommy Wonder, Selmer Jackson, Betty Blythe, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



campaign, he and Al Steffes would put their heads together and would unfailingly find the money that was needed. No exhibitor would refuse a liberal contribution when these two leaders appealed to him for funds.

The organized exhibitor's loss is, of course, RKO's gain, for in his new position Mr. Richey will be able to render that company invaluable services.

### **EDWARD GOLDEN AGAINST BLOCK BOOKING AND FOR THEATRE DIVORCEMENT**

That old war horse, Edward Golden, vice president of Monogram Pictures, has done it again—he has declared himself and his company in favor of the elimination of block-booking and for the divorcement of theatres from production-distribution. This he did by a speech he delivered to the exhibitors that gathered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on the occasion of the annual gathering of MPTOA.

Mr. Golden criticized the attempts at self-regulation, by reason of the fact that the "regulators," he said, represent vested interests in the industry, and such interests must necessarily look after themselves first, even if their decisions and acts would harm others.

Mr. Golden called the attention of his hearers to the observations he made at the self-regulation efforts under the NRA Law, when he represented independent distributors on the Code Authority. "I saw too much of the operations of people in our industry during my association with the Code Authority," he said, "ever to agree to a continuation of the methods employed in self-regulation as they proposed it."

### **PICTURE THEATRES EXEMPTED FROM PROVISIONS OF WAGE-HOUR LAW**

Last week the Wage-Hour Law Administration issued an informal opinion that moving picture theatres, since they are intra-state business, are exempt from the provisions of the Wage-Hour law.

At the same time, however, Mr. Calvert Magruder, general counsel of the Wage-Hour Law Administration, issued a warning that this is merely an informal opinion, and that, in case the courts decided differently, it has to be modified in accordance with the courts' decision. This opinion, as well as other similar opinions that may be issued from time to time, has been issued, he said, merely for the guidance of the administrator until he is directed otherwise by a court ruling.

### **SEE "THE YOUNG IN HEART" FOR YOUR OWN ENTERTAINMENT BY ALL MEANS**

Few exhibitors can spare the time to see a picture for their own entertainment. Whenever they see a picture, it is to determine its value to their box office that they see it for.

Occasionally, however, a picture comes along that they see and enjoy as entertainment and not for the purpose of determining its value to their box office.

"The Young in Heart" is a picture that deserves to be seen by exhibitors for their own entertainment.

### **PROOF THAT THE BLIND SELLING SYSTEM IS WRONG**

When a producer tells you that he is going to spend two million dollars on a picture and that he is, therefore, entitled to fifty per cent of your gross receipts, you are made to believe that he has a fine story ready for that picture, and that the picture will really turn out to be excellent entertainment.

Fifty per cent of the gross receipts is too much for any picture—that you know, but under the talk of the distributor's representative you are made to weaken and, despite past experiences, you give in. What is your chagrin, then, when the picture turns out to be no better than an ordinary melodrama, despite huge settings and length?

When Paramount induced many of you to agree to give as the distributor's share fifty per cent of your gross receipts for "Men with Wings," you were no doubt made to believe that it would turn out one of the finest aeroplane melodramas that have been produced to this day. What shock you will get when you see it! With the exception of the color and the huge settings, there is hardly a situation in it but has been shown in one form or another in program melodramas of this type that have been produced by either Universal, RKO, or Columbia.

Paramount should do with "Men with Wings" what MGM has usually done when it found out that one of its big pictures did not "click" at the box office—place it on a lower classification.

### **REPUBLIC WILL NOT GO ON THE AIR**

Under the heading, "Thoughts at Random," of the October 29 issue, there was published a criticism of Republic Pictures, on the ground that it contemplated going on the air with a sponsored program. The information was taken by the exhibitor-contributor from different trade papers, which published this information at different times lately and was not denied.

Mr. Herbert Yates, Sr., the force behind Republic Pictures, denies that his company has ever contemplated going on the air. He is first, last and always, he says, an independent producer, and intends to make no move that will harm the interests of independent exhibitors.

HARRISON'S REPORTS congratulates Mr. Yates for his fine sentiments toward the independent exhibitors.

### **AN ADVERTISING ANGLE ON "DRUMS"**

"Abe Lincoln in Illinois," the stage drama by Robert E. Sherwood, now playing at the Plymouth Theatre, in New York, is making a great hit. Most of the reviewers have praised it.

Raymond Massey, as Lincoln, does great work.

Mr. Massey is one of the stars of the United Artists picture "Drums."

Those exhibitors who have "Drums" booked might take advantage of the fact that Raymond Massey is the star to draw additional patrons into the theatre; they might use the following wording, in their newspaper advertisements as well as in the lobby of their theatre:

"Since you cannot see Raymond Massey in the stage play, 'Abe Lincoln in Illinois,' now playing to capacity houses at the Plymouth Theatre, in New York City, see him in 'Drums,' now playing at the ——— Theatre, on ———."



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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**1270 SIXTH AVENUE****Room 1812****New York, N. Y.****A Motion Picture Reviewing Service****Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors**

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial Columns, if it is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher**P. S. HARRISON, Editor****Established July 1, 1919****Circle 7-4622****A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING****Vol. XX****SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1938****No. 47****THE CURE FOR HOLLYWOOD'S LOSS OF SPIRIT**

How often have I warned you to be careful as to what prices and to what terms you agree in purchasing your 1938-39 season's pictures? Many times, I am sure you remember. My reasons for it were the demoralization of the production forces in Hollywood.

It seems as if the Hollywood fellows are still demoralized. Read what W. R. Wilkerson has said in his editorial that appeared in the October 28 issue of the Hollywood Reporter:

"Hollywood is not the same Hollywood. It's not the same place it was last year, the year before and years before that. There's not the same atmosphere, there's not the same spirit—the same enthusiasm. It's peopled by the same individuals, but reflecting on their personalities of last year, the year before and years before that. They are not the same—they seem like strangers.

"What's happened to Hollywood? What's happened to the great romance of making successful pictures? What's happened to the happy men and women who used to enthuse so with great accomplishment and fight to win it?

"Hollywood has lost heart. There is no heart in Hollywood. The people are cold, their enthusiasm for accomplishment has been taken up now with scheming, with an effort to dictate and a demand to rule each other. There is not the old spirit, there is no friendship, no gaiety based on real happiness, there is no pride in successful effort nor the fight to accomplish it. No, it's a spirit of domination, of power, of rule. That would be swell if that domination would make better pictures, if the power would tend to better conditions contributing greater happiness; if that rule would make the burden placed on every one for greater accomplishment in their work. But has it? Or will it?

"There is no inspiration for greater picture progress. Every one has a mad on for everyone else that has bred envy, jealousy and generated a spirit of doing nothing. Every one wants to fight to gain the edge. But gaining it, where does it place them? What has been the accomplishment, where are they headed for with that edge? Every faction that goes into making pictures, from the producer down to the grip, is at odds with each other. So how can better pictures be made? How can this industry progress?

"Hollywood has lost heart and will lose more than that unless its creators awaken to the fact there is a job to be done. But it can't be accomplished with all this fighting; particularly a battle that no one seems to be able to reason what he hopes to win and, in winning, what's the reward."

This is Hollywood for you! But it is a true picture, for Mr. Wilkerson lives there and meets people every day and is in a position to get a true picture of Hollywood as it is. Now you can see for yourself why there are so large a number of million-dollar flops.

The disease is rooted too deeply to be cured by admonition. Those who look for the high-paying jobs of those above them in position will not stop from looking for them just because a trade paper editor has told them that they are doing the wrong thing; they will continue looking for them: their eyes are riveted to the size of the weekly check, which the other fellow gets.

There is only one cure for the deplorable condition in Hollywood: the elimination of block booking and blind selling, so that pictures may sell on merit, for when pictures sell on merit there will be a reckoning for those who haven't the ability to make them: there will be no room for incompetents. Then one has to show that he deserves the higher salary before he can have any hope of getting it.

Separation of theatres from production is another means whereby the conditions in Hollywood may be ameliorated. Today, the man who makes a picture for a major company knows that, good or bad, it will be played in the theatres, not only of his own company, but also of the other companies. Under such circumstances, there is no real incentive for them to make good pictures.

Eliminate block-booking and blind-selling, and separate theatres from production-distribution. That's the cure!

**"MOVIE QUIZ" A MISTAKE BUT—**

Fifty answers to the \$250,000 prize Movie Quiz contest are sold at newstands for fifteen cents. This naturally lowers the dignity of the contest, and may add to the number of dissatisfied participants.

The following footnote is attached to the list:

"Note: All titles marked with this star (\*) have no correct answers. Any answer you may have picked will be considered right by the judges.

"There are a number of pictures listed above that may not have as yet been shown in your city. If you desire to choose any of them it will be to your advantage because you will be in a position to check the answers when viewing the pictures."

Interference of this kind certainly cannot prove helpful to the contest.

But whether the Movie Quiz contest is a mistake or not, the industry cannot help going through with it. And it cannot admit openly that it has proved a failure.



### **"Man with 100 Faces" with Tom Walls, Lilli Palmer and Noel Madison**

(Gaumont-British, October 1; time, 71 min.)

A fair crook melodrama, with a somewhat limited appeal for American audiences since the players, with the exception of Noel Madison, are not known well here. It is a sort of modern "Robinhood" story, in which the hero steals from the rich in order to help the poor. The story is pretty far-fetched insofar as the methods employed by the hero are concerned, for he carries out the most difficult robberies with the utmost of ease; as a matter of fact, it is not made clear just how he does it. The production is lavish and the performances adequate. For the first half hour the action is draggy; but it picks up speed in the second half and ends in a fairly exciting way. The love interest is unimportant:—

Unknown to everyone but his assistant, Tom Walls carries out the most daring robberies in order to turn over the funds to charitable and worthy institutions. Lilli Palmer, a wealthy society woman, suspects Walls, but, since she was in love with him, does not say anything about it. A gang of American gangsters are eager to meet Walls, since he had outwitted them in two important robberies. Miss Palmer unwittingly leads them to him. But Walls is ready and traps them, turning them over to the police. He then leaves the country with Miss Palmer, who had promised to marry him.

W. B. N. Ferguson wrote the novel from which the plot was adapted, and A. R. Rawlinson and Michael Pertwee, the screen play; Albert deCourville directed it. In the cast are Edmund Breen, Leon M. Lion, Charles Heslop, and others.

Not for children; adult fare. Class B.

### **"The Great Waltz" with Luise Rainer, Fernand Gravet and Miliza Korjus**

(MGM, November 4; time, 103 min.)

Very good entertainment. It is a delight to the eye as well as to the ear, for, in addition to the well-known and charming Strauss waltzes which are played throughout, the picture has been given a beautiful production. The photography and lighting are really extraordinary; this is so particularly in one scene where the composer and a singer ride through the Vienna Woods, the beauty of which inspires Strauss to compose the song "Tales of the Vienna Woods." The plot has been changed around considerably; nevertheless, it still has human appeal, and as entertainment should be a welcome relief to those who do not enjoy swing music. There is no doubt as to its effect on mature and music-loving audiences; not only are the familiar waltz tunes played and presented well, but some of them are sung by MGM's new European star, Miliza Korjus, who shows remarkable talents; in addition to an unusual voice, she has beauty and personality. As to how the young, swing-crazy crowds will take it, that is another matter, for they are more or less contemptuous of classical music:—

Johann Strauss (Fernand Gravet) gives up his position as a bank clerk to devote his time to composing waltzes; he has the approval of Poldi, his fiancée (Luise Rainer). He forms an orchestra and appears at a cafe to play for the owner, who shuts the windows so that the people would not hear the waltzes, which were taboo in polite society. The music is, however, heard by Carla Donner (Miss Korjus), an opera singer, and she is so pleased with it that she invites Strauss to a party at her home. There she sings his latest composition, which so enchants the guests that they shout their approval. But Strauss, humiliated when Carla jests about his affection for her in the presence of her wealthy lover, Count Hohenfried, (Lionel Atwill), leaves. Later he marries Poldi. His compositions become popular throughout the world and he is soon wealthy. But another meeting with Carla, during a revolutionary uprising, makes him realize that he loved her; she, too, confesses her love for him. Poldi finds out about this and is miserably unhappy. When the time comes for the lovers to go away together, Carla sends Strauss back to his wife, for she felt that they could not be happy with her shadow between them. Years later, Strauss is decorated by the Emperor.

Gottfried Reinhardt wrote the story, and Samuel Hoffenstein and Walter Reisch, the screen play; Julien Duvivier directed it. In the cast are Herman Bing, Hugh Herbert, Curt Bois, Leonid Kinsky, Al Shean, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Blondie" with Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake**

(Columbia, November 30; time, 72 min.)

An amusing program comedy, revolving around the trials and tribulations of a young married couple who find it difficult to keep out of trouble. The characters are taken from a syndicated newspaper comic strip and, therefore, are known widely; it is possible that Columbia plans a series of pictures with these characters. If so, there should be a ready market for them since many people follow this strip daily in the newspapers. The masses should enjoy the picture, since it presents, in a comic vein, problems that beset many families in moderate circumstances.

In the development of the plot, the young couple (Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake) and their child (Larry Simms) live in a small house in the suburbs. Miss Singleton worries Lake because, as soon as he finishes paying for one thing that she had bought on the installment plan, she buys another. For their wedding anniversary, she plans to surprise him with new furniture, which she had ordered on the installment plan. But things don't work out as she had planned. Lake, unknown to her, had endorsed a \$500 note for a girl in his office; the girl had disappeared and the collection agency was demanding payment from Lake. Since he could not pay, they take the furniture away. In order to help Lake out, Jonathan Hale, his employer, offers to give him a bonus and a raise if he would put through a deal with Gene Lockhart, a difficult customer, who had refused to see other salesmen. Through an accident, Lake and Lockhart become friends; Lockhart does not know who Lake really was. Through a harmless prank, they get into trouble and even land in jail. But eventually everything is solved; Lake puts the deal through, gets a \$5,000 bonus, and a salary increase; peace reigns in his household once again.

The characters were taken from the comic strip by Chic Young; Richard Flournoy wrote the screen play, Frank R. Strayer directed it, and Robert Sparks produced it. In the cast are Ann Doran, Gordon Oliver, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Flight to Fame" with Charles Farrell and Jacqueline Wells**

(Columbia, October 12; time, 57 min.)

A fair program melodrama, with some good stunt flying. In May, 1935, Columbia released a picture called "Air Hawks," which used for its main idea a situation similar to the one in this picture—that is, the villain, by playing a death-ray beam on aeroplanes, could destroy them and their occupants. The story has, however, been changed around, the only similarity being in the use of the ray, and in the manner in which the hero finally traps the villain. For those who did not see the other picture, this offers some exciting moments, particularly in the closing scenes, where the hero endangers his own life in order to capture the villain. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

Charles Farrell, an officer in the U. S. Army aviation division, and a few of his superior officers, go to the home of an inventor, to investigate a machine which he claimed could, within a few minutes, completely destroy an aeroplane or ship on which it focused its beam; but the experiment does not work. Farrell invites the inventor and his daughter (Jacqueline Wells) to the air base, where tests were going to be made of a new plane he had designed. Farrell himself takes the plane up and pilots it safely through some daring flying. The following day his commander takes the plane up; but the plane mysteriously burns in mid-air, falling to the ground; the commander is killed. This happens again, when another aviator takes up Farrell's second model. Farrell is of the opinion that the ray was the cause of it. In company with a friend, he goes up in his plane and spies the machine in a secluded spot; he drops bombs on it. They finally land and discover that the murderer was the inventor's assistant, who had had a grudge against the men he had killed and others whom he had planned to kill; he dies. Farrell is happy that Miss Wells' father was not involved in the scandal. He and Miss Wells plan to marry.

Michael L. Simmons wrote the story and screen play; C. C. Coleman, Jr. directed it. In the cast are Hugh Sothorn, Alexander D'Arcy, Jason Robards, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



### **"Exposed" with Glenda Farrell and Otto Kruger**

(Universal, November 4; time, 63 min.)

A fair program melodrama. What the story lacks in plausibility is made up for in fast and exciting action, and so one's attention is held pretty well throughout. The heroine is not a very pleasing character for she resorts to trickery to carry out her plans; but one cannot help admiring her courage in the face of danger. The romance is pleasant:—

Glenda Farrell, chief photographer for a picture magazine, snaps a picture of a sleeping hobo in a cheap lodging house, only to learn that he had been a former assistant district attorney who had disappeared after a criminal case in which an innocent man had been sent to the electric chair. Her paper prints the picture with disparaging remarks, and Kruger sues them for libel. He agrees to settle the case for \$15,000 on condition that Miss Farrell find for him the missing daughter of the man he had sent to the chair. Learning that the girl had died, Miss Farrell induces her girl friend (Lorraine Krueger) to pose as the missing girl; Kruger then settles the case and turns the check over to the girl, who naturally turns it back to Miss Farrell. Kruger is a changed man; he goes back to the district attorney's office. But a gangster who had known the girl Miss Krueger was impersonating, tries to blackmail them. Miss Farrell is compelled to get something against him. She takes pictures of him and his gang committing a murder. They attempt to kill her, but Kruger, who had found out the truth, saves her. He forgives her and asks her to marry him.

The story idea was by George R. Bilson; Charles Kaufman and Franklin Coen wrote the screen play, Harold Schuster directed it, and Max H. Golden produced it. In the cast are Herbert Mundin, Charles Brown, Richard Lane, and others.

Not suitable for children. Class B.

### **"Hard to Get" with Dick Powell and Olivia DeHavilland**

(Warner Bros., November 5; time, 78 min.)

A fair comedy. The production is pretty lavish and the acting spirited. The story is, however, routine, and depends mostly on gags for its comedy situations; some of them are comical and others just mildly amusing. Dick Powell sings only one song, of the popular variety. Charles Winninger, as the athletically-inclined father of the heroine, provokes laughter on several occasions by his attempts to outwit his valet, a superior athlete. The action becomes a little silly in a few spots; but, since the whole thing is done in a light vein without any attempt at seriousness, it will probably prove amusing to those who enjoy comedies:—

Olivia DeHavilland, daughter of millionaire Winninger, is enraged when Dick Powell, manager of a gas station, forces her to clean ten bungalows when she cannot pay for the gas he put in her car; he refuses to believe her story. She decides to teach him a lesson. She goes back to the gas station the following day and apologizes; she then makes a date with Powell. When they meet that evening she tells him she was a maid at Winninger's home; she then suggests that he go to Winninger with a business plan he had in mind. Winninger, knowing what his daughter wanted, sends Powell to a friend, pretending that he needed his o.k. first; the friend throws him out of the office. But Powell tries many different ways of getting in to see him. In the meantime, Miss DeHavilland falls in love with Powell and decides to tell him the truth. But he finds out all about it himself and refuses to have anything to do with her. Winninger and his friend realize that Powell had a good business proposition and arrange to finance him. Eventually Winninger brings the young couple together and helps them get married.

Joseph Schrank and Wally Klein wrote the story, and Richard Macaulay, Jerry Wald and Maurice Leo, the screen play; Ray Enright directed it, and Sam Bischoff produced it. In the cast are Allen Jenkins, Melville Cooper, Bonita Granville, Isabel Jeans, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Strange Faces" with Dorothea Kent, Frank Jenks and Andy Devine**

(Universal, November 18; time, 66 min.)

A good program comedy-melodrama. The action is fast and at times pretty exciting. Most of the laughter is provoked by the efforts of the hero and the heroine, rival reporters, to obtain scoops for their respective newspapers and to outwit each other in so doing, in spite of the fact that they were in love with each other. The closing scenes, in which the heroine's life is endangered by the villain, who was posing as a respectable citizen but whom she had suspected, holds one in suspense:—

Dorothea Kent and Frank Jenks, reporters working on rival newspapers, plan to marry; they promise to trust each other. But the moment a story breaks they forget promises and try to outwit each other. When a young man, supposedly a notorious gangster, is found murdered, the heroine doubts that it was the gangster. Knowing of a young man who had looked just like the gangster, she goes to his rooming house only to find that he had gone back home. She follows him to the small town, but she feels certain that he was really the gangster, and that he had murdered the young man who looked like him so as to fool the police and at the same time ingratiate himself with the young man's wealthy uncle. Jenks follows Miss Kent to this town; they have many quarrels. Miss Kent tries to prevent the gangster from marrying the town's richest girl (Mary Treen), whose fortune he planned to get. He forces both girls in a car and drives away with them; but Jenks and Andy Devine, who loved Miss Treen, rush after them and rescue the girls; the gangster is caught.

Gornelius Reece and Arndt Guisti wrote the story, and Charles Grayson, the screen play; Errol Taggart directed it, and Burt Kelly produced it. In the cast are Hobart Cavanaugh, Frank M. Thomas, Leon Ames, and others.

The murder makes it unsuitable for children. Class B.

### **"The Little Adventuress" with Edith Fellows, Jacqueline Wells and Cliff Edwards**

(Columbia, October 24; time, 62 min.)

Mediocre program fare. The hackneyed plot is developed without one new angle; and since the action is for the most part slow-moving, one loses interest in the outcome. Although the individual performances are satisfactory, the players are handicapped by the ordinary material and trite dialogue. As entertainment, it is suitable mostly for children, who may be thrilled at the sight of little Edith Fellows riding a horse to victory in an important race:—

When her parents, vaudeville performers, are killed, Edith's only consolation was the fact that she still had the horse that had been used in the act; she felt that this horse would make a great racer. Cliff Edwards, who had been with the act for some time, feels compelled to send Edith to her aunt; but Edith pleads with him to take her to her cousin (Richard Fiske), who used to race horses. Her cousin is delighted to see her, and promises to help her train the horse, even though he knew his fiancée (Jacqueline Wells) objected to his being mixed up with racing again. The horse fails in its first race, but Fiske cheers Edith up. Edwards sells his automobile and trailer in order to get enough money together to enter the horse in another race. The aunt places an attachment on the horse for an old debt. Miss Wells pays off the debt. The horse becomes ill but recovers in time to enter the race. When Edwards discovers that their jockey was crooked, he insists that Edith race the horse; she does and wins. Every one is happy. Miss Wells' father decides to go into the racing stable business with Fiske.

Michael L. Simmons and Paul Jarrico wrote the story, and Michael L. Simmons, the screen play; D. Ross Lederman directed it. In the cast are Virginia Howell, Harry Bradley, Kenneth Harlan, and Charles Waldron.

Suitability, Class A.

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## NO AGREEMENT BETWEEN ALLIED AND PRODUCERS

The following statement was issued on November 8 by the Washington office of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors regarding the progress of the negotiations:

### "NO AGREEMENT REACHED

"In Chicago on the 4th instant Chairman Cole, of Allied's Negotiating Committee, issued a statement setting forth the status of the negotiations with the Distributors' Committee. That statement pointed out that the Allied Committee had received from the Distributors the maximum concessions the latter felt they could yield and that these were being reduced to writing after which they would be reported to Allied's Board of Directors for final action.

"Unfortunately, Cole's statement was not published in full but appeared under headlines announcing that an agreement between Allied and the Distributors had been reached. The Allied Committee is at a loss to understand this since their statement did not warrant the assumption and they made it clear to the Distributors' Committee that the publicity should not reflect even by implication that there was an agreement.

### "DIRECTORS MUST ACT

"Cole's statement pointed out that a resolution of the Allied Board required that the maximum concessions of the Distributors be reported back for final action. Not only does the Board want the final say, but in the nature of the case there could be no agreement at this time, since much will depend on the manner in which the commitments of the Distributors in reference to trade practices and the details of the arbitration machinery are set down on paper. In order that there may be no further misunderstanding, the following is quoted from the resolution of the Board authorizing the continuation of negotiations:

"\* \* \* final approval and ratification by the Board of Directors to be conditioned upon the working out of a satisfactory arbitration procedure to deal with important issues as enumerated in the memorandum of the Negotiating Committee dated October 27, and upon the further condition that nothing in the arrangement shall bind Allied or any of its members from pursuing such measures as may be decided upon to gain such further relief as may seem necessary or desirable."

### "ALLIED'S MAIN POINTS NOT CONSIDERED

"An additional and important reason why Allied's Committee could not enter into an agreement at this time is that the two main planks in Allied's platform—(a) abolishment of compulsory block booking and blind selling and (b) separation of production and distribution from exhibition—have not been considered in the negotiations. The reason for this is that the Distributors' Committee announced that it was not authorized to go any further on one than to offer a small cancellation privilege and was not authorized to deal with the other at all.

"It goes without saying that the Board will want to consider with the greatest care any proposed agreement which does not include the two points

for which Allied has waged a campaign for many years.

### "NO M. P. T. O. A. MERGER

"Another matter that has caused uneasiness in independent exhibitor ranks is the rumor that a movement to merge Allied into the Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America is on foot. This suggestion, coming at this time, tends to impair the confidence of the independent exhibitors in the pending negotiations as reflected by inquiries reaching this office.

"Let it be known that no such action is in contemplation so far as Allied is concerned. Nor would such action be possible under the constitution which restricts membership to independent theatres.

### "EDITORS PLEASE PUBLISH

"The Allied Negotiating Committee joins in urging the trade papers to correct the inaccurate impressions that have been created regarding the status of the negotiations and the continued independence of Allied. Only by keeping the record straight can confidence in the situation be maintained and the proceedings carried to a full development and logical conclusion."

## AN ALLIED STATES' APPEAL FOR FUNDS

Mr. Nathan Yamins, President of Allied States Association, has just sent out an appeal to the exhibitors for financial assistance to the national organization.

"Look at the headlines for the past year or so," says he.

"North Dakota Divorcement Bill Passed

"Important Victory in the Dallas Interstate Case

"Passage by the Senate of the Neely Bill

"Federal Three-Judge Court Upholds North Dakota Theatre Divorcement Bill

"Government Announces Sweeping Monopoly Investigation

"Government Files Anti-Trust Suit Against Motion Picture Monopoly

"All these have been instigated through Allied's work, and as a direct result negotiations are now being carried on with a Distributors' Committee looking to regulation within the industry, if possible, of the following trade practices:

"Compulsory Block Booking; Right to Buy; Unfair Allocation Changes; Forcing of Shorts, Newsreels, Trailers; Contract Description of Product; Exclusive Selling; Unreasonable Protection; Designated Playdates; Non-Delivery of Pictures; Score Charges; and Minimum Admissions."

He closes his appeal with a plea that each exhibitor send his check for \$5 to help defray the expenses the organization has made and is still to make until it gains for the exhibitors all the advantages possible.

HARRISON'S REPORTS recommends that every independent exhibitor heed Mr. Yamins' appeal by sending a check for that amount of money, or for more, to Mr. Herman A. Blum, Treasurer, Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, 729 Fifteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XX

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1938

No. 47

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Mr. Wong, Detective—Monogram (68 min.)	175
Night Hawk, The—Republic (63 min.)	162
Personal Secretary—Universal (62 min.)	159
Road Demon—20th Century-Fox (70 min.)	175
Service DeLuxe—Universal (86 min.)	174
Shadows over Shanghai—Grand Nat'l (64½ min.)	178
Sisters, The—Warner Bros. (98 min.)	167
Stablemates—MGM (89 min.)	167
Storm, The—Universal (76 min.)	179
Straight, Place and Show—20th Cent.-Fox (67 min.)	162
Submarine Patrol—20th Century-Fox (94 min.)	182
Suez—20th Century-Fox (104 min.)	175
Swing That Cheer—Universal (62 min.)	175
Tarnished Angel—RKO (68 min.)	179
That Army Touchdown—Paramount (See "Touchdown Army")	159
That Certain Age—Universal (100 min.)	167
There Goes My Heart—United Artists (83 min.)	170
They're Off—20th Century-Fox (See "Straight, Place and Show")	162
Too Hot to Handle—MGM (105 min.)	158
Torchy Gets Her Man—Warner Bros. (62 min.)	183
Touchdown Army—Paramount (70 min.)	159
Vacation from Love—MGM (65 min.)	167
Young Dr. Kildare—MGM (81 min.)	171
Young in Heart, The—United Artists (90 min.)	183
Youth Takes a Fling—Universal (77 min.)	163
Wanted by the Police—Monogram (59 min.)	158

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

## 1937-38 Season

8213 Phantom Gold—All Star west. (56 min.)	Aug. 31
8005 I Am the Law—E. Robinson-Barrie	Sept. 2
8208 The Colorado Trail—Starrett (55 min.)	Sept. 8
8013 The Lady Objects—Stuart-Ross	Sept. 9
8026 Juvenile Court—Kelly-Darro-Hayworth	Sept. 15
8284 The Stranger from Arizona—Jones (56 m.)	Sept. 22
8012 Girls' School—A. Shirley-R. Bellamy	Sept. 30
8285 Law of the Texan—Buck Jones (54 min.)	Oct. 24
8286 California Frontier—Buck Jones	Dec. 15

(End of 1937-38 Season)

## Beginning of 1938-39 Season

9101 You Can't Take It with You—Arthur	Sept. 29
9201 West of Santa Fe—Starrett (57 min.)	Oct. 3
9021 Crime Takes a Holiday—Jack Holt	Oct. 5
9026 Flight to Fame—Farrell-Wells	Oct. 12
The Little Adventurers—Fellows	Oct. 24
9211 In Early Arizona—All Star west. (53 min.)	Nov. 2
Adventure in Sahara—Kelly-Gray	Nov. 15
Blondie—Singleton-Lake	Nov. 30
The Terror of Tiny Town—Midgets	Dec. 1
9202 Rio Grande—Starrett (59 min.)	Dec. 8
There's That Woman Again—Douglas (r)	Dec. 24
International Spy—Wray-Bellamy	Dec. 29

("Homicide Bureau" listed in the last Index as an October 19 release has been postponed)

## First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

## Beginning of 1938-39 Season

365 Secrets of an Actress—Francis-Brent	Sept. 10
352 Four Daughters—Lane-Page-Garfield	Sept. 24
358 Garden of the Moon—O'Brien-Lindsay	Oct. 1
368 Broadway Musketeers—Lindsay-Litel	Oct. 8
369 Girls on Probation—Reagan-Bryan	Oct. 22
Brother Rat—Morris-P. Lane-Wyman	Oct. 29
Angels with Dirty Faces—Cagney-O'Brien	Nov. 19

## Gaumont-British Features

(1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

Man with 100 Faces—Walls-Palmer-Madison	Oct. 1
The Lady Vanishes—Lockwood-Lukas (reset)	Nov. 1
The Frog—Beery-Harker	Nov. 15
Climbing High—J. Matthews-M. Redgrave	Dec. 1

## Grand National Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

229 The Utah Trail—Tex Ritter (59 min.)	Aug. 12
231 King of the Sierras—H. Bosworth (57 min.)	Aug. 26
230 Dangerous Secrets—Paul Lukas	Sept. 2

(End of 1937-38 Season)

## Beginning of 1938-39 Season

311 Shadows over Shanghai—Dunn-R. Morgan	Oct. 14
325 Frontier Scout—G. Houston-B. Marion	Oct. 21
326 Titans of the Deep—undersea story	Oct. 28
312 Cipher Bureau—L. Ames-J. Woodbury	Nov. 4
345 The Sunset Strip Case—Sally Rand	Nov. 11



## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 905 Vacation from Love—O'Keefe-Rice-Owen ..Sept. 30  
906 Stabilemates—Beery-Rooney-Hamilton .....Oct. 7  
907 Young Dr. Kildare—Ayres-L. Barrymore ....Oct. 14  
904 Listen Darling—Garland-Bartholomew (r) ..Oct. 21  
909 The Citadel—Donat-Russell-Richardson .....Oct. 28  
908 The Great Waltz—Rainer-Gravat-Korjus ...Nov. 4  
911 Spring Madness—O'Sullivan-Ayres-Hussey ..Nov. 11  
912 The Shining Hour—Crawford-Sullivan .....Nov. 18  
913 Out West with the Hardys—Rooney-Stone ..Nov. 25  
Flirting with Fate—Joe E. Brown .....Dec. 2  
Dramatic School—Rainer-Marshall-Goddard ..Dec. 9  
Katherine the Last—Gaal-Torre-Connolly ....Dec. 16  
A Christmas Carol—Owen-Kilburn .....Dec. 23  
910 Sweethearts—MacDonald-Eddy-F. Morgan ..Dec. 30

## Monogram Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

### 1937-38 Season

- 3742 Man's Country—Jack Randall (55 min.) ....July 6  
3741 Mexicali Kid—Jack Randall (51 min.) .....Sept. 14  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 3810 Barefoot Boy—Moran-Fain-Windsor .....Aug. 3  
3811 Under the Big Top—Main-Nagel-LaRue ...Aug. 31  
3859 Starlight over Texas—Tex Ritter (56 min.) ..Sept. 7  
3817 Wanted by the Police—Darro-Knapp .....Sept. 21  
3894 Mr. Wong, Detective—Boris Karloff .....Oct. 5  
3827 Sweetheart of Sigma Chi—Reissue .....Oct. 10  
3860 Where the Buffalo Roam—Ritter (62 min.) ..Oct. 12  
3801 Gangster's Boy—Jackie Cooper (reset) ....Nov. 9  
3851 Gun Packer—Jack Randall .....Nov. 9  
Gang Bullets—Anne Nagel .....Nov. 16  
3861 Little Tenderfoot—Tex Ritter .....Nov. 23  
I Am a Criminal—John Carroll .....Dec. 7  
Tough Kid—Frankie Darro .....Dec. 14  
3852 Last Outlaw—Jack Randall .....Dec. 21  
Sky Raiders—John Trent .....Dec. 28

## Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 3802 Campus Confessions—Grable-Henry .....Sept. 16  
3803 Sons of the Legion—O'Connor-Lee .....Sept. 23  
3804 King of Alcatraz—Naish-Patrick .....Sept. 30  
3805 Touchdown Army—Howard-Carlisle .....Oct. 7  
3806 Arkansas Traveler—Burns-Parker .....Oct. 14  
3807 Mysterious Rider—Dumbrille-Fields .....Oct. 21  
3808 Men with Wings—MacMurray .....Oct. Special  
3809 Illegal Traffic—Naish-Carlisle (re) .....Nov. 4  
3810 If I were King—Colman-Dee-Rathbone ...Nov. 11  
3811 Thanks for the Memory—Hope-Ross .....Nov. 18  
3812 Arrest Bulldog Drummond—Howard-Angel ..Nov. 25  
Little Orphan Annie—Gillis-Kent .....Dec. 2  
Ride a Crooked Mile (Escape from Yesterday)  
—Farmer-Erikson-Tamiroff (re) .....Dec. 9  
The Frontiersman—Boyd-Hayes-Hayden ..Dec. 16  
One Third of a Nation—Sidney-Erikson ....Dec. 23  
Tom Sawyer, Detective—O'Connor-Cook ..Dec. 23  
Artists and Models Abroad—J. Benny-  
J. Bennett-M. Boland .....Dec. 30

## Republic Features

(1776 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

### 1937-38 Season

- 7014 The Higgins Family—Gleason family .....Aug. 29  
7104 Man from Music Mountain—Autry (58 m.) ..Sept. 12  
7107 Prairie Moon—Gene Autry (59 min.) .....Oct. 3  
7108 Rhythm of the Saddle—Autry (58 min.) ....Nov. 4  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 861 Pals of the Saddle—Three Mesq. (55 min.) ..Aug. 20  
851 Billy the Kid Returns—Rogers (56 min.) ...Sept. 4  
862 Overland Stage Raiders—Three Mes. (55m.) ..Sept. 20  
805 Down in Arkansaw—Byrd-Weaver Bros. ...Sept. 29  
817 The Night Hawk—Livingston-Travis .....Oct. 3  
806 I Stand Accused—Cummings-Mack-Talbot ...Oct. 28  
Storm over Bengal—P. Knowles-Cromwell ..Nov. 14

## RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 906 The Mad Miss Manton—Stanwyck-Fonda ....Oct. 21  
907 Tarnished Angel (Miracle Racket)—Eilers ..Oct. 28  
981 Lawless Valley—George O'Brien .....Nov. 4  
908 Annabel Takes a Tour—Bail-Oakie .....Nov. 11

## Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 910 Meet the Girls—Lang-Bari-Allen .....Oct. 7  
919 Five of a Kind—Dionne Quints .....Oct. 14  
912 Mysterious Mr. Moto—Lorre-Maguire .....Oct. 21  
913 Suez—Power-Young-Annabella (re) .....Oct. 28  
914 Always in Trouble—Withers (re) .....Nov. 4  
915 Just Around the Corner—Temple .....Nov. 11  
916 Sharpshooters—Donlevy-Bari .....Nov. 18  
909 Submarine Patrol—Greene-Kelly (r) .....Nov. 25  
918 Road Demon—Arthur-Valerie-Armetta .....Dec. 2  
924 Up the River—Martin-Brooks-Foster .....Dec. 9  
920 Down on the Farm—Prouty .....Dec. 16  
917 Thanks for Everything—Menjou-Oakie .....Dec. 23  
923 Kentucky—Young-Greene-Brennan .....Dec. 30

## United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- Algiers—Boyer-Gurie-Lamarr .....Aug. 5  
Drums—Sabu-Livesay-Massey-Hobson .....Sept. 30  
There Goes My Heart—March-Bruce-Kelly .....Oct. 14  
The Young in Heart—Gaynor-Fairbanks, Jr. ....Oct. 27  
Lady and the Cowboy—Cooper-Oberon (reset) ..Nov. 17  
Trade Winds—March-J. Bennett-Sothorn .....Dec. 22  
The Duke of West Point—T. Brown-Hayward ...Dec. 29  
Made for Each Other—Lombard-Stewart .....Postponed

## Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- A2028 Prison Break—Farrell-MacLane .....July 15  
A2008 Little Tough Guy—Wilcox-Parish .....July 22  
A2003 Letter of Introduction—Leeds-Menjou ....Aug. 5  
A2031 The Missing Guest—Kelly-Moore .....Aug. 12  
A2007 That Certain Age—Durbin-Cooper .....Oct. 7

("Dark Rapture" listed in the last Index as an August 26 release, has been taken from the 1937-38 season and put in the 1938-39 release schedule)

(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- A3057 Strawberry Roan—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3058 Fiddlin' Buckaroo—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3059 King of the Arena—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3060 Honor of the Range—Maynard reissue ....Aug. 15  
A3061 Smoking Guns—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3062 Gun Justice—Maynard reissue .....Aug. 15  
A3041 Dark Rapture—Roosevelt Exp. ....Aug. 26  
A3025 Freshman Year—Dunbar-Truex .....Sept. 2  
A3034 Personal Secretary—Gargan-Hodges .....Sept. 9  
A3051 Black Bandit—Bob Baker (57 min.) .....Sept. 16  
A3017 Road to Reno—Scott-Hampton .....Sept. 23  
A3012 Youth Takes a Fling—McCrea-Leeds ....Sept. 30  
A3026 Swing That Cheer—Truex-Wilcox-Moore ..Oct. 14  
A3052 Guilty Trail—Bob Baker (57 min.) .....Oct. 21  
Service DeLuxe—C. Bennett-Price .....Oct. 21  
The Storm—Bickford-MacLane-Grey .....Oct. 28  
A3028 The Last Express—K. Taylor-D. Kent .....Oct. 28  
Exposed—Farrell-Kruger (63 min.) .....Nov. 4  
A3053 Prairie Justice—Bob Baker (57 min.) .....Nov. 4  
His Exciting Night—Ruggles-Munson ...Nov. 11  
A3035 Strange Faces—Kent-Jenks (66 min.) ....Nov. 18  
Little Tough Guys in Society—Boland-Auer-  
Horton .....Nov. 25  
Secrets of a Nurse—Lowe-Mack .....Dec. 2  
The Last Warning—Foster-Jenks .....Dec. 9  
Pirates of the Skies—Taylor-Hudson .....Dec. 16  
Newsboys' Home—J. Cooper-W. Barrie ..Dec. 23



## Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

306	Four's a Crowd—Flynn-DeHavilland	Sept. 3
305	Valley of the Giants—Morris-Trevor	Sept. 17
302	The Sisters—Flynn-Davis-Louise	Oct. 15
	Hard to Get—Powell-DeHavilland	Nov. 5
	Torchy Gets Her Man—Farrell-MacLane	Nov. 12
	Nancy Drew, Detective—Granville-Litel	Nov. 26

## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

#### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

9501	Hollywood Graduation—Color Phap. (7m.)	Aug. 26
9701	Gym Jams—Krazy Kat (6½m.)	Sept. 2
9751	(9561) Early Bird—Scrappys (6½m.)	Sept. 16
9851	Screen Snapshots No. 1—(9½m.)	Sept. 16
9502	Animal Cracker Circus—Color Rhap. (7m.)	Sept. 23
9801	Football Giants—Sport Thrills (10½m.)	Sept. 28
9651	Community Sing No. 1—(10½m.)	Oct. 1
9852	Screen Snapshots No. 2—(10m.)	Oct. 14
9702	Hot Dogs on Ice—Krazy Kat (5½m.)	Oct. 21
9503	Little Moth's Big Flame—Color Rhap. (r)	Nov. 3
9802	Ski Rhythm (Ski Legs)—Sport Thrills (r)	Nov. 4
9652	Community Sing No. 2—(10½m.)	Nov. 4
9551	Bermuda—Islands of Paradise—Col. Tours	Nov. 4
9552	Provincial Quebec—Tours	Nov. 18
9553	Big Town Commuters—Tours	Dec. 2
	(9752 "Happy Birthday," listed in the last Index as an October 7 release, has been postponed)	

### Columbia—Two Reels

#### 1937-38 Season

8193	Phantom Bullets—Great Adv. #13 (16½m.)	Sept. 22
8194	The Lure—Great Adv. #14 (16m.)	Sept. 29
8195	Trails End—Great Adv. #15 (15½m.)	Oct. 6

(End of 1937-38 Season)

#### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

9421	Many Sappy Returns—All Star (17½m.)	Aug. 19
9401	Violent is the Word of Curly—Stooge (18m.)	Sept. 2
9422	Sue My Lawyer—All Star (17m.)	Sept. 16
9423	Not Guilty Enough—All Star (17m.)	Sept. 30
9402	Mutts to You—Stooge (18m.)	Oct. 14
9121	Night of Terror—The Spider's Web #1 (29½ min.)	Oct. 21
9424	Nightshirt Bandit—All Star (17m.)	Oct. 28
9122	Death Below—Spider #2 (19m.)	Oct. 28
9123	High Voltage—Spider #3 (19m.)	Nov. 4
9124	Surrender Or Die—Spider #4 (18m.)	Nov. 11
9425	A Nag in the Bag—All Star (17m.)	Nov. 11
9125	Shoot to Kill—Spider #5	Nov. 18
9126	Sealed Lips—Spider #6	Nov. 25
9403	Three Goofy Gobs—Stooge (16m.)	Nov. 25
9127	Shadows of the Night—Spider #7	Dec. 2
9128	While the City Sleeps—Shadow #8	Dec. 9
9426	Home on the Range—All Star (17m.)	Dec. 9

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

#### 1937-38 Season

H-730	Nostradamus—Hist. Mystery (11m.)	Sept. 24
W-690	The Winning Ticket—Captain cart. (9m.)	Oct. 1
W-691	Honduras Hurricane—Capt. cart. (9m.)	Oct. 15
S-715	Grid Rules—Pete Smith (10m.)	Oct. 15

(more to come)

#### 1938-39 Season

T-851	Cairo, City of Contrast—Travel. (9m.)	Sept. 10
C-931	Aladdin's Lantern—Our Gang (10m.)	Sept. 17
T-852	Madeira, Isle of Romance—Travel. (8m.)	Oct. 1
F-951	How to Watch Football—Benchley (9m.)	Oct. 8
C-932	Men in Fright—Our Gang (11m.)	Oct. 15
K-921	Passing Parade #1—(10m.)	Oct. 15
M-873	They Live Again—Miniatures (10m.)	Oct. 22
S-901	Hot on Ice—Pete Smith (10m.)	Oct. 22
T-853	Jaipur, The Pink City—Travel. (8m.)	Oct. 29
F-952	Opening Day—Robert Benchley	Nov. 12
M-874	Miracle of Salt Lake—Miniatures	Nov. 12
S-902	Man's Greatest Friend—P. Smith (10m.)	Nov. 19

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

P-616 Think It Over—Crime Doesn't Pay (20m.) Sept. 24

(End of 1937-38 Season)

## Paramount—One Reel

A8-3	Busse Rhythm—Headliner (10½ min.)	Oct. 7
P8-3	Paramount Pictorial No. 3—(9 min.)	Oct. 7
L8-2	Unusual Occupations #2—(10m.)	Oct. 7
K8-2	Mexico—Color Cruises (8½m.)	Oct. 7
V8-3	Rube Goldberg's Travelbag—Para. (8½m.)	Oct. 14
T8-3	Sally Swing—Betty Boop (6½m.)	Oct. 14
E8-3	Goonland—Popeye (8m.)	Oct. 21
R8-4	Champion Airhoppers—Sportlight (9m.)	Oct. 28
C8-2	The Playful Polar Bears—Col. Clas. (7½m.)	Oct. 28
A8-4	Orrin Tucker and His Orchestra—Headliner (9½ min.)	Nov. 4
P8-4	Paramount Pictorial #4—(9½m.)	Nov. 4
J8-2	Popular Science #2—(10m.)	Nov. 4
V8-4	Raising Canines—Paragraphic (9½m.)	Nov. 11
T8-4	On with the New—Betty Boop	Nov. 11
E8-4	A Date to Skate—Popeye cartoon	Nov. 18
R8-5	Super-Athletes—Sportlight (9½m.)	Nov. 25
A8-5	Hal Kemp and His Orchestra—Headliner (9 min.)	Dec. 2
L8-3	Unusual Occupations #3	Dec. 2
K8-3	Costa Rica—Color Cruises	Dec. 2
P8-5	Paramount Pictorial #5	Dec. 9
T8-5	Pudgy in Thrills and Chills—B. Boop	Dec. 9

## RKO—One Reel

94601	Submarine Circus—Reclism (10 min.)	Sept. 16
94101	Brave Little Tailor—Disney (9 min.)	Sept. 23
94202	Styles and Smiles—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Sept. 30
94302	Deep End—Sportscope (10m.)	Oct. 7
94102	Farmyard Symphony—Disney (8m.)	Oct. 14
94602	Trans America—Reclism (11m.)	Oct. 14
94203	Talent Auction—Nu Atlas (10m.)	Oct. 28
94103	Donald's Golf Game—Disney (8m.)	Nov. 4
94303	Bird Dogs—Sportscope (10m.)	Nov. 4
94204	Venctian Moonlight—Nu Atlas (11m.)	Nov. 25
94104	Ferdinand the Bull—Disney (8m.)	Nov. 25
94105	Mcrbabies—Disney (9m.)	Dec. 9
94205	Cafe Rendezvous—Nu Atlas (10m.)	Dec. 23
94106	Mother Goose Goes Hollywood—Disney (8 min.)	Dec. 23

## RKO—Two Reels

93501	A Western Welcome—R. Whitley (18m.)	Sept. 9
93701	Stage Fright—Leon Errol (18 min.)	Sept. 23
93102	March of Time—(18m.)	Sept. 30
93401	Beaux and Errors—Kennedy (18m.)	Oct. 7
93601	Sea Melody—Ted Fio Rito (19m.)	Oct. 21
93103	March of Time—(20m.)	Oct. 28
93201	Hectic Honeymoon—Radio Flash (17m.)	Nov. 4
93702	Major Difficulties—Leon Errol (19m.)	Nov. 18
93104	March of Time	Nov. 25
93402	A Clean Sweep—E. Kennedy (17m.)	Dec. 2
93502	Prairie Papas—Ray Whitley (18m.)	Dec. 16
93602	Romancing Along—Headliner (21m.)	Dec. 30

## Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

9401	What Every Boy Should Know—Lehr (10 min.)	Sept. 2
9502	The Goose Flies High—T. Toon (6½m.)	Sept. 9
9601	Fashion Forecasts—Fashions (10½m.)	Sept. 16
9503	Wolf's Side of the Story—T. Toon (6½m.)	Sept. 23
9202	Filming Big Thrills—Adv. Cam. (9½m.) r.	Sept. 30
9522	The Glass Slipper—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Oct. 7
9102	Land of Contentment—L. Thomas (10½m.)	Oct. 14
9504	The New Comer—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Oct. 21
9301	Timber Toppers—Sports (10½m.) (r)	Oct. 28
9505	The Stranger Rides Again—T. Toon (7m.)	Nov. 4
9234	Athletic Oddities—Adv. Cam. (9m.)	Nov. 11
9523	Housewife Herman—Terry-Toon (6½m.)	Nov. 18
9402	What Every Girl Should Know—Lew Lehr (11 min.)	Nov. 25
9506	Village Blacksmith—Terry-Toon	Dec. 2
9203	Daily Diet of Danger—Adv. Cam. (9m.)	Dec. 9
9524	Gandy Goose in Doomsday—Terry-Toon	Dec. 16
9602	Fashion Forecasts	Dec. 23
9507	Gandy Goose in the Frame Up—T. Toon	Dec. 30



## Universal—One Reel

### 1937-38 Season

- A2295 Pixie Land—Oswald cart. (7m.) .....Sept. 12  
A2296 Hollywood Bowl—Oswald (6½m.) .....Sept. 26  
(End of 1937-38 Season)

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- A3366 Stranger Than Fiction #55—(9½m.) .....Oct. 10  
A3242 Rabbit Hunt—Lantz cartoon (7m.) .....Oct. 17  
A3243 The Sailor Mouse—Lantz cart. (7m.) .....Nov. 7  
A3354 Going Places with Thomas #56—(10m.) ..Nov. 14  
A3367 Stranger Than Fiction #56 .....Nov. 21  
A3244 Disobedient Mouse—Lantz cart. (8m.) ...Nov. 28  
A3355 Going Places with Thomas #57 (8½m.)...Nov. 28  
A3368 Stranger Than Fiction #57 .....Dec. 5

## Universal—Two Reels

- A3223 Side Show Fakir—Mentone (20m.) .....Oct. 12  
A3681 Millions for Defense—Red Barry #1  
(19½ min.) (reset) .....Oct. 18  
A3682 The Curtain Falls—Barry #2 (19½m.) ....Oct. 25  
A3683 The Decoy—Barry #3 (21m.) .....Nov. 1  
A3684 High Stakes—Barry #4 (20m.) .....Nov. 8  
A3685 Desperate Chances—Barry #5 (18m.) ....Nov. 15  
A3224 Patio Serenade—Mentone (17m.) .....Nov. 16  
A3686 Oriental Torture—Barry #6 (21m.) .....Nov. 22  
A3687 Midnight Tragedy—Barry #7 (20m.) ....Nov. 29  
A3688 The Devil's Disguise—Barry #8 (19m.) ...Dec. 6  
A3689 Between Two Fires—Barry #9 (19m.) ....Dec. 13  
A3225 Music and Models—Mentone (18m.) .....Dec. 14

## Vitaphone—One Reel

### Beginning of 1938-39 Season

- 4701 Larry Clinton—Mel. Masters (10 min.)...Sept. 3  
4901 The Great Library Misery—Vit. Var. (11m.)..Sept. 10  
4601 Miracles of Sport—Color Par. (9 min.) ....Sept. 10  
4301 Identified—True Adventures (12 min.) ....Sept. 17  
4501 A Feud There Was—Mer. Mel. (8 min.)...Sept. 24  
4801 Porky in Wackylant—L. Tunes (7 min.) ..Sept. 24  
4602 China Today—Color Parade (11 min.) .....Oct. 1  
4401 Pow Wow—Technicolor Special (10 min.) ..Oct. 1  
4702 Ray Kinney and His Hawaiians—  
Melody Masters (10 min.) .....Oct. 1  
4502 Little Pancho Vanilla—Mer. Mel. (7 min.)..Oct. 8  
4802 Porky's Naughty Nephew—L. T. (7½m.)...Oct. 15  
4303 Defying Death—True Adv. (11m.) .....Oct. 15  
4902 Table Manners—Vit. Var. (10m.) .....Oct. 15  
4703 Jimmy Dorsey and Orch.—Mel. Mas. (9m.)..Oct. 22  
4503 Johnny Smith and Poker Huntas—M. Mel.  
(8 min.) .....Oct. 22  
4504 You're an Education—Mer. Mel. (7½m.) ..Nov. 5  
4603 Mechanix Illustrated—Col. Parade (10m.)..Nov. 5  
4803 Porky in Egypt—L. Tunes (7m.) .....Nov. 5  
4302 Toils of the Law—True Adv. (12m.) .....Nov. 12  
4704 Merle Kendrick and Orch.—Mel. M. (10m.)..Nov. 12  
4402 The Immortal Brush—Tech. Special (9m.)..Nov. 19  
The Night Watchman—Mer. Mel. (7m.) ....Nov. 19  
4903 A Vaudeville Interlude—Vit. Var. (10m.)..Nov. 19  
4804 The Daffy Doc—Looney Tunes .....Nov. 26  
4604 Nature's Mimics—Color Parade .....Dec. 3  
4506 Daffy Duck in Hollywood—Mer. Mel. ....Dec. 3  
4705 Happy Felton and Orch.—Mel. M. (10m.) ..Dec. 3  
4304 Treacherous Waters—True Adventures ....Dec. 10  
4904 Robbin' Good—Vit. Varieties .....Dec. 10  
4805 Porky the Gob—Looney Tunes .....Dec. 17  
4507 Count Me Out—Merrie Melodies .....Dec. 17  
4706 Dave Apollon and Orch.—Mel. M. (11m.) ..Dec. 24  
4508 The Mice Will Play—Mer. Melodies .....Dec. 31  
4605 Mechanix Illustrated #2—Color Parade .....Dec. 31

## Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 4011 Toyland Casino—Bway. Brev. (19m.) .....Oct. 8  
4012 Two Shadows—Bway. Brev. (20m.) .....Oct. 22  
4013 The Knight Is Young—Bway. Brev. (19m.) ..Oct. 29  
4014 Cleaning Up (Hats and Dogs)—Cross and  
Dunn (17 min.) .....Nov. 12  
4002 Declaration of Independence—Technicolor  
Prod. (18 min.) .....Nov. 26  
4015 Stardust—Benny Davis (18m.) .....Dec. 10  
4016 Boarder Trouble—Joe Asbestos .....Dec. 17  
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## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

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- 719 Wednesday ..Nov. 16  
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721 Wednesday ..Nov. 23  
722 Saturday ....Nov. 26  
723 Wednesday ..Nov. 30  
724 Saturday ....Dec. 3  
725 Wednesday ..Dec. 7  
726 Saturday ....Dec. 10  
727 Wednesday ..Dec. 14  
728 Saturday ....Dec. 17  
729 Wednesday ..Dec. 21  
730 Saturday ....Dec. 24  
731 Wednesday ..Dec. 28  
732 Saturday ....Dec. 31

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20 Saturday .....Nov. 19  
21 Wednesday ..Nov. 23  
22 Saturday .....Nov. 26  
23 Wednesday ...Nov. 30  
24 Saturday .....Dec. 3  
25 Wednesday ...Dec. 7  
26 Saturday .....Dec. 10  
27 Wednesday ...Dec. 14  
28 Saturday .....Dec. 17  
29 Wednesday ...Dec. 21  
30 Saturday .....Dec. 24  
31 Wednesday ...Dec. 28  
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- 30 Wednesday ...Nov. 16  
31 Saturday .....Nov. 19  
32 Wednesday ...Nov. 23  
33 Saturday .....Nov. 26  
34 Wednesday ...Nov. 30  
35 Saturday .....Dec. 3  
36 Wednesday ...Dec. 7  
37 Saturday .....Dec. 10  
38 Wednesday ...Dec. 14  
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40 Wednesday ...Dec. 21  
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### Metrotone News

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### Pathe News

- 95234 Wed. (E.)..Nov. 16  
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95236 Wed. (E.)..Nov. 23  
95137 Sat. (O.)..Nov. 26  
95238 Wed. (E.)..Nov. 30  
95139 Sat. (O.)..Dec. 3  
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95141 Sat. (O.)..Dec. 10  
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95244 Wed. (E.)..Dec. 21  
95145 Sat. (O.)..Dec. 24  
95246 Wed. (E.)..Dec. 28  
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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1938

No. 48

### Do the Producers Want Peace in the Industry?

Several weeks have passed since a committee of exhibitors met with a committee of distributors to agree upon a program that would remove industry abuses and to establish fair voluntary arbitration, but so far no agreement has been reached. It is supposed that the distributors are putting into writing whatever reforms they have granted to the exhibitors at these conferences, to be discussed finally when the draft is ready and the committees are again called to meet.

Since the concessions are to come, not from the exhibitors, but from the distributors, it is reasonable for us to assume that the failure of the committees to come to a full understanding with the exhibitors has been caused by the reluctance of the distributors to grant to the exhibitors concessions the latter would consider worth-while. From what has appeared in the trade papers and from what Mr. Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied, said at Columbus, Wednesday, last week, at the Ohio exhibitors convention, one gathers the impression that, what the distributors have so far granted is nothing but the Kuykendall program, which they themselves prepared, but which is altogether unsatisfactory to the independent theatre owners represented by Allied. The independent exhibitors want the right to buy pictures against any competitor, as long as they are willing to pay the price. And they want the producers to divorce themselves from exhibition, a demand made on them also by the U. S. Government. What the producers have so far offered seems merely enough to enable them to tell the Government that self-regulation in the industry has already been effected by common consent, and that, as a result of it, neither the prosecution of the suit against them now pending, nor corrective legislation, is necessary. If they should succeed in "selling" such an idea to the Government officials, the efforts of the independent theatre owners to bring about a passage of the Neely Bill and to have state legislatures enact protective laws will be frustrated.

Are we to assume that the producers intend to grant no worth-while concessions, and that they have carried on negotiations merely for the purpose of stalling? Their conduct toward the Department of Justice in the pending suit is interpreted by many exhibitors as an indication of a well-defined plan of bluffing and of stalling. Not only are they employing legal technicalities to enable them to avoid filing an answer to the suit, but they are also refusing to discontinue their acquisition of theatres while legislation is pending.

One of the two concessions that the exhibitors want more than anything else has not been even discussed. I am referring to the exhibitor demand that the distributors give up operation and control of picture theatres. Unless they grant this demand, why continue negotiating?

Personally I regret that the producers have assumed such an attitude, particularly since they are now dealing with the United States Government. They realize that the present Government suit is the consequence of their failure to recognize some of the just exhibitor demands. Yet they don't realize that their dilatory tactics may have further consequences. Isn't it about time for them to stop tomfoolery, settling down to making a serious attempt to adjust the exhibitor grievances?

There is no question that most members of the distributor committee are working sincerely to effect a solution of the exhibitor grievances. And they would have solved them long before this had those higher up given the word.

### REFORMS THE PRODUCERS ARE WILLING TO GRANT

When the exhibitor and the distributor committees adjourned in New York toward the end of October they

agreed to meet in Chicago on November 3 to have further talks.

Before the date of the Chicago meeting, Allied prepared a memorandum, setting forth what the Allied representatives asked of the producers, and what the producers granted to the exhibitors. This memorandum was to be of confidential nature, by reason of the fact that the two committees were to keep the discussions secret until a full agreement was reached. But a representative of *Box Office* obtained in some way a copy of this memorandum, and the terms that had so far been agreed upon were divulged by that paper.

Since the points upon which agreement had already been reached had been divulged, Mr. Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States Association, felt that he was no longer bound by secrecy. Consequently, he discussed these terms at the Columbus meeting of the Ohio exhibitors, on November 16. Here is a resumé of the exhibitor-distributor agreement:

1. *Theatre Divorcement*: Distributors unwilling to discuss subject.

2. *Block-booking and Blind-selling*: Allied first demanded that all pictures be identified, with allocations written in, with the exhibitor to have the right to select the pictures he desired from the total number offered. The distributors first offered a sliding scale of cancellations based on average film rental paid for all features offered, as follows: 20%, up to \$100; 15%, from \$100 to \$200; 10%, over \$200, with Westerns and Foreign features not counted in computing cancellation percentages. No cancellation for top percentage brackets. They also offered to identify as many pictures as possible, but they could not promise many.

To satisfy the civic, fraternal and religious groups, they offered to leave cancellation of the objectionable pictures to arbitration, and to permit the exhibitor to buy an occasional good picture from programs he had not contracted for. This agreement did not include United Artists, for which the distributor representatives could not speak.

Although the exhibitor representatives felt that the distributor proposals fell short of the ideal condition, they were impressed by the reasons the distributor representatives cited; yet they felt that the distributor proposal could be enlarged. The exhibitor representatives expressed their willingness to accept the distributor proposal with respect to the identified pictures, with the understanding that the top price for the 15% eliminations be made \$250. In regard to the unidentified pictures, the cancellations to be as follows: 30%, up to \$100; 25%, from \$100 to \$250; and 20%, over \$250, with the understanding that the same method be applied for arriving at the average film rentals as with the identified pictures.

The exhibitor representatives agreed to accept the elimination proposals that refer to the satisfying of the public groups. They also demanded that the cancellations should not be confined only to lower brackets, as is the case now, but should be distributed through the several brackets so as not to disturb the exhibitor's "average."

The distributors finally expressed their willingness to distribute the cancellations through all the brackets on numerical basis, but they were unwilling to agree to sell on a basis of "average," to be adjusted at the end of the season.

3. *Arbitration*: The distributors first offered local conciliation boards, with a possibility of establishing in New York a national supervising body. Allied proposed a procedure on the model of commercial arbitration, involving: (a) establishing in each exchange center of panels of available men representing each economic division in the territory; (b) arbitration boards evenly balanced as between conflicting interests, with the right (1) to call in a referee  
(Continued on last page)



### **"Prison Train" with Fred Keating and Linda Winters**

(*Malcolm-Browne Prod., running time, 65 min.*)

A fair program melodrama, with a better-than-average production for an independent picture of this type; it should do pretty well on the lower half of a double-feature program. The photography and sound are good; and the story is developed in a logical way, with some excitement and suspense. For the most part, the director has done a competent job; the only fault is that at times he strives for effect by using closeups and in so doing slows up the action. The love interest is mildly pleasant:—

Fred Keating, gangster head of the number rackets business, knows that Alexander Leftwich, night-club owner and racketeer, was trying to frame him so as to get him out of the way in order to take over the business for himself; but Keating warns him not to try anything. Keating, who had made a fortune, decides to leave the racket to travel with his young sister (Linda Winters), who was unaware of her brother's nefarious practices. Keating, annoyed when Leftwich's son tries to make love to his sister, quarrels with him and kills him; he is tried and sentenced to life imprisonment at Alcatraz. But Leftwich is determined that Keating should not reach the prison alive. By clever scheming and helped by his gang, he manages to get the prison train switched to a siding. But Keating, who had been tormented by the other prisoners and knew what to expect, grabs a gun from one of Leftwich's henchmen (Clarence Muse), who was travelling on the train as a waiter. He kills Leftwich and then falls to his death under the wheels of the train. His sister, who had been travelling on the train to be near her brother, is consoled by Peter Potter, a federal agent, who had been sent along to see that nothing happened to the prisoners. He captures the gang.

Leonardo Bercovici wrote the story, and Shepard Traube, the screen play; Gordon Wiles directed it, and Alvin G. Manuel was associate producer. In the cast are Faith Bacon, James Blakely, John Pearson, Val Stanton, and others.

Not for children. Adult fare. Class B.

### **"His Exciting Night" with Charles Ruggles, Richard Lane and Ona Munson**

(*Universal, November 11; time, 60 min.*)

A good program comedy, the kind that should go over well in crowded theatres. There are several situations that provoke uproarious laughter, due to the plight of the meek hero, who, on his wedding night, is victimized by his scheming employer. The action moves at a fast pace, with something happening every minute. Charles Ruggles is very good in the part of the harassed bridegroom; despite the silliness of some of the situations in which he is placed, one cannot help sympathizing with him:—

Richard Lane, head of the brokerage concern for which Ruggles worked, is furious when he hears that he would lose a good account when Ruggles married the niece of his client, who had decided to let Ruggles handle her affairs. Immediately after the wedding, Regis Toomey, working under instructions from Lane, whisks Ruggles away on the pretext that the bride (Ona Munson) had so arranged it. He takes Ruggles back to his own apartment, where a blonde vaudeville actress (Marion Martin) was waiting for him; all this was part of the plot. The woman's husband (Maxie Rosenbloom) breaks in and Ruggles and Miss Martin are forced to flee. They become involved with a crazy taxi driver, who takes them out to the country, and finally get back to the city in the morning. Miss Munson is heartbroken, for the taxi driver had called to tell her that her husband was dead. When Ruggles returns, his wife thinks she was seeing a ghost. More complications arise; but Ruggles finally finds out about Lane's part in the whole affair and forces him to sign a confession. He then leaves on a honeymoon with his wife.

The plot was adapted from the story "Adam's Evening," by Katherine Kavanaugh; Pat C. Flice, Edward Eliscu and Morton Grant wrote the screen play, Gus Meins directed it, and Ken Goldsmith produced it. In the cast are Stepin Fetchit, Benny Baker, Raymond Parker, Francis Robinson, and others.

There are quite a few risqué remarks which children will not understand, but adolescents may; suitability, therefore, for adults, Class B.

### **"Sharpshooters" with Brian Donlevy, Lynn Bari and John King**

(*20th Century-Fox, November 18; time, 63 min.*)

A fair program comedy-melodrama, with a mythical kingdom background; it should appeal mostly to young folk. The story, which is based on a familiar idea, is extremely far-fetched, to the point of being ridiculous at times. But, since the action is fast, it may go over where patrons are not too particular about story values. Discriminating audiences will find some of the situations so silly that they may become bored before the picture is half finished:—

Brian Donlevy, a newsreel cameraman, and his assistant (Wally Vernon), arrive at a small foreign country, there to take pictures of the coronation of the young boy king, whose father had been murdered by conspirators. Donlevy manages to get through the guards onto the palace grounds; he meets the king, who turns out to be a real boy. Having accidentally learned that the conspirators planned to kill the young king, Donlevy tells Lynn Bari, the king's teacher, what he had heard; she rushes with him to the Army chief (Douglas Dumbrille). But it develops that Dumbrille was at the head of the plot; he imprisons Donlevy, Miss Bari, and the king. But through a ruse, Donlevy and the king escape. They enlist the aid of the people to overthrow Dumbrille and his cohorts; they are helped by John King, uncle to the king, who had been unjustly accused of treason by Dumbrille. Dumbrille and his plotters are overpowered. Donlevy gives his blessings to Miss Bari and John King, who were in love with each other; he then leaves with Vernon on a new assignment.

Maurice Raps and Lester Ziffren wrote the story, and Robert Ellis and Helen Logan, the screen play; James Tinling directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are C. Henry Gordon, Sidney Blackmer, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Up the River" with Preston Foster, Arthur Treacher, Phyllis Brooks and Tony Martin**

(*20th Century-Fox, December 9; time, 76 min.*)

A good program comedy-melodrama; the performances are very good. It was made once before, in 1930, and, as in the first version, this offers extremely good comedy situations; they should provoke hearty laughter. It hasn't the same strong emotional appeal as the former picture had, for the melodramatic, serious side of the story has been toned down in favor of comedy. Those who did not see the first picture will find this an enjoyable change from the ordinary prison story, as it is more or less of a burlesque on prison life. Music and dancing have been worked into the plot logically,—in the situation, where the inmates give their yearly play. The romance is pleasant:—

When Preston Foster and Arthur Treacher, two confidence men, are sent back to the prison in which they had served terms previously, the inmates are happy for they were the two best football players the team had ever had. So popular are they, that they get many privileges. Tony Martin, one of the prisoners, was looking forward to a parole so that he could go back home and marry his sweetheart (Phyllis Brooks), who, too, had served a prison term; they had both been mixed up with a crooked bond salesman (Sidney Toler), but, realizing they had made a mistake, had decided to go straight. Martin learns that Toler had gone to his home town and was fleecing his mother along with their neighbors; but Miss Brooks was helpless to do anything for Toler threatened to expose her and Martin, whose family did not know he was in prison. Desperate, Martin plans to escape; but Foster and Treacher, knowing he would ruin his chances for a parole if he did so, knock him out and escape in his place. With the help of the warden (Alan Dinchart), who had followed them, they trap Toler, forcing him to return the money and leave town. Treacher and Foster return to the prison in time to win the football game for their prison.

Maurine Watkins wrote the story, and Lou Breslow and John Patrick, the screen play; Alfred Werker directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Slim Summerville, Eddie Collins, Jane Darwell, Bill Robinson, and others.

Suitability, Class B.



### **"The Law West of Tombstone" with Harry Carey**

(RKO, November 18; time, 73 min.)

A good outdoor program melodrama. The action fans should go for it for several reasons: first, the story is different from the general run of westerns, and, secondly, it is chuck-full of action and excitement; it has comedy, too, both in situation and dialogue. Harry Carey is excellent in the part of the self-made, quick-shooting Mayor, who believes the lies he tells about his heroism. One thrilling situation is that in which Carey offers to shoot it out with a desperado; what makes this scene exciting is the fact that the audience does not know that Carey had removed all the bullets from the gun. The romance is developed according to formula:—

Carey, known as a liar, horse thief, and swindler, returns to his home town in Texas, where he becomes involved in a horse stealing charge. The Sheriff offers Carey his freedom on condition that he turn his talents to the side of the law instead of against it; his first assignment is to get a desperado (Tim Holt). But Carey, who knew and liked Holt, lets him get away, to the disgust of Jean Rouverol, who had been one of Holt's victims in a train robbery. Carey, by means of his customary exaggerations, builds up sympathy for Holt, who is accepted into the community. Carey appoints himself Mayor, holding court in his saloon. He makes enemies of three brothers, who were bullies and were hated by the community. In the meantime, Miss Rouverol shows her dislike for Holt, who had killed her fiance (Allan Lane). She did not know that Lane had been a highwayman. In a fight with the three crooked brothers who were menacing the ranch owners by closing up Indian property which lead to the river, Carey comes out victorious. He is actually elected Mayor. In the meantime, Miss Rouverol had found out the truth and, since Holt had changed to a law-abiding citizen, falls in love with him. Carey does not reveal that he was her father, for she thought her father had died a hero in the war.

Clarence W. Young wrote the story, and John Twist and Clarence W. Young, the screen play; Glenn Tryon directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Evelyn Brent, Clarence Kolb, Esther Muir, Paul Guilfoyle, and others.

There is a little too much shooting in this for children. Good for adults. Class B.

### **"Thanks for the Memory" with Bob Hope and Shirley Ross**

(Paramount, November 18; time, 78 min.)

A fair domestic comedy-drama. It is a remake of "Up Pops the Devil," produced by Paramount in 1930; it was not much of a picture then nor is it much now. The plot is exactly the same, except for the insertion of a musical number, which, although pleasing, cannot help matters much. The hero and the heroine are likeable persons; they win one's sympathy, but they are surrounded by worthless characters, who spend most of their time drinking and wisecracking, tiring the spectator with their chatter:—

Shirley Ross, married to Bob Hope, decides that, in order for Hope to finish his novel, he must give up his job and permit her to go back to work. He resents being supported by his wife, but she is so insistent that he succumbs; he has to take care of household duties and cook. Jealous and annoyed when Hope, after a quarrel, asks their next-door neighbor, a young girl, to go out with him, Miss Ross, in the presence of friends, insults him by saying that she supported him. He leaves in a rage, before the heroine could tell him that she was going to have a baby. Hope regains his self respect and finishes the novel. He goes back to the apartment to see the heroine, only to find that she was planning to sublease it. He is shocked when she asks him for a divorce. But when he learns about the baby, he is overjoyed and induces Miss Ross to forgive him and start over again.

Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich wrote the story, and Lynn Starling, the screen play; George Archainbaud directed it, and Mel Shauer produced it. In the cast are Charles Butterworth, Otto Kruger, Hedda Hopper, Patricia Wilder, Roscoe Karns, Laura Hope Crews, Emma Dunn and Wm. Collier, Sr.

Hardly suitable for children. Harmless for adults. Class B.

### **"Spring Madness" with Maureen O'Sullivan, Lew Ayres and Burgess Meredith**

(MGM, November 11; time, 66½ min.)

An enjoyable light, romantic program comedy. The simple plot offers opportunities for several extremely amusing situations; but most of the credit for the entertaining quality of the picture belongs to the performers, who bring freshness and spirit to their respective parts. Although the action takes place on college grounds, the story steers clear of campus activities that are usually shown in college pictures:—

Maureen O'Sullivan, a college student, falls madly in love with Lew Ayres, a Harvard senior; he loves her, too, but refuses to admit it since he and his roommate (Burgess Meredith) had planned to leave college before graduation in order to sail for Russia for a two year stay so as to study the economic structure there. Meredith, fearing that feminine wiles would upset their plans, pleads with Ayres not to see Miss O'Sullivan again; but Ayres refuses. When Miss O'Sullivan's college friends learn about Ayres' plans, they set about to make him change his mind. First, one of the girls has her father, a newspaper publisher, offer Ayres a job as reporter; but when that does not work, they decide that the best thing to do would be to get him jealous. And so with the help of their English professor (Truman Bradley), they carry out their plans, which work. Ayres decides to give up his plans to live in Russia and, instead, to settle down to a pleasant, peaceful married life in America. Meredith gives up in disgust.

The plot was adapted from a play by Philip Barry; Edward Chodorov wrote the screen play, S. Sylvan Simon directed it and Edward Chodorov produced it. In the cast are Ruth Hussey, Ann Morriss, Joyce Compton, Jacqueline Wells, Frank Albertson, Sterling Holloway, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Storm over Bengal" with Patric Knowles, Richard Cromwell and Rochelle Hudson**

(Republic, November 14; time, 65 min.)

A very good program adventure-melodrama. As far as production values are concerned, it is comparable to most of the major company product—the acting, direction, photography, and settings are all of the highest order. Although it is a little slow in getting started, it soon picks up speed, offering exciting action and thrills. Particularly thrilling are the closing scenes in which the hero, despite many obstacles, almost single-handed puts an end to an Arab revolt. The romance is pleasant. Most of the action takes place in northwest India:—

Patric Knowles, British Captain stationed in India, is overjoyed when his fiancee (Rochelle Hudson) arrives with his brother (Richard Cromwell), who, too, was in the Army. Cromwell, who had fallen in love with Miss Hudson, resents the fact that Knowles intended to marry Miss Hudson and then send her away until he completed his work of quelling a rebellious native leader (Douglas Dumbrille), who, by means of a short wave radio broadcast, was inciting the tribes to fight. But the marriage is delayed since it was necessary for Knowles to fly to the palace of the dying Maharajah and obtain his signature to a letter granting Britain temporary military control of the border in the event of his death. Knowles is captured by Dumbrille, who learns that a British regiment was on its way to capture him. Knowles' assistant, although wounded, escapes and flies back to camp to warn the regiment, but he is too late. Cromwell goes up in the plane, attaches a message to his coat, and then crashes the plane to attract the attention of the regiment; he is killed. They get the message and prepare for the attack. After terrific fighting, they overcome the tribes; Knowles, who had escaped, blows up the cave where the ammunition was stored. He later marries Miss Hudson.

Dudley Waters wrote the original screen play; Sidney Salkow directed it, and Armand Schaefer produced it. In the cast are Colin Tapley, Gilbert Emery, Douglas Walton, Halliwell Hobbes, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



when desirable; (2) to enter binding awards, within the limitations of general law and of arbitration statutes, in controversies involving: clearance controversies (even between exhibitors), selling away from an established customer, overbuying, coercion in selling pictures, lack of available prints, forcing of shorts, unsuitability of pictures for showing in a particular community or on preferred playing time, unfair competitive practices in the operation of theatres, shortage in reports on percentage engagements, non-delivery of sold pictures, holding up of pictures by a prior run, and all controversies arising under the exhibition contracts and the commitments of the distributors growing out of the negotiations. The Allied representatives proposed also that formal pre-trials be held to try to bring about a settlement of a controversy so as to avoid arbitration, but that the findings at these pre-trials should not call for an award in case no agreement is possible.

The distributors agreed on these proposals in principle, the final decision to be made after the details were worked out satisfactorily. But they expressed a doubt as to whether arbitration affecting the operating policies of theatres, including clearance, could be made effective, particularly if the award involved the payment of money.

The Allied representatives felt that, if the distributor committee should induce each distributor to sign, individually, an agreement to arbitrate all controversies arising out of their dealings with the exhibitors, the exhibitor committee would undertake to induce as many exhibitors as possible to sign a similar agreement, individually, embracing arbitration in differences arising even between exhibitors themselves. Such an agreement, the Allied representatives felt, would be acceptable to the Government.

4. *The Right to Buy:* The Allied representatives said, "We want the right to buy!" The distributors proposed that every established theatre that is not a "fly-by-night," and is operated and maintained decently shall have a run—whatever run is available. In other words, they agreed to eliminate "exclusive selling" entirely. But they refused to sell away from an established theatre to any other theatre or circuit of theatres, whether affiliated or otherwise, so long as the customer keeps abreast of the times, operates and maintains his theatre properly, and pays the same rentals.

The Allied representatives felt that these proposals are broad and susceptible to possibly conflicting interpretations, but they were willing to accept them provided the distributors agreed to let the interpretations and enforcement of them be made by the arbitration boards.

5. *Forcing of Shorts, Newsreels, and Trailers:* The distributors first proposed that the forcing of shorts be made proportional; that is, the exhibitor to be obliged to take from a particular distributor the shorts he needs to complete his program on the days he uses that distributor's features. They offered no concessions whatever on either newsreels or trailers. Allied took the position that there must be no forcing of either shorts, newsreels or trailers. The distributors finally agreed not to do any forcing. They said, "We will try to sell shorts, newsreels and trailers without features, but you won't have to take them in order to get our features."

6. *Designated Play-dates:* The distributors first offered that, if a local board declared a picture unsuitable for Sunday showing, the exhibitor need not show it on such a day, but that they reserved the right to designate another picture in its place. Allied insisted that there should be no play-date designation—not on either flat-rental pictures or on pictures of the percentage with a minimum guarantee class anyway. The final distributor proposal was that there should be no play-date designation on flat-rental pictures or pictures of the percentage with a minimum guarantee class, but that there should be on the other classes.

The Allied position was prompted by the following considerations: In some cities, the week-end business is as high as eighty percent of the entire week's business. For an exhibitor, then, to pay thirty-five or forty per cent of his week-end business for only one picture creates a condition that proves, in the long run, disastrous to him. For this reason the Allied representatives insisted that the distributors concede this point. They particularly insisted that there must not be preferred playing time on (1) flat-rental pictures, (2) percentage pictures with a minimum guarantee, and (3) pictures objectionable for week-end showing on account of: (a) public sentiment; (b) if prior experience had proved that pictures of the same general type do not produce the best results on the days selected by the distributor. Differences arising on pictures of the class (3) are to be submitted to arbitration.

The exhibitor committee should have insisted that there should be no percentage pictures with a minimum guarantee

at all. The supposition for the minimum guarantee demand is that the exhibitor is thus compelled to work hard to put over a picture contracted for on such terms. But when we see theatre-owning distributors sidetrack even pictures they themselves make because of their inability to put them over, they certainly should be the last persons on earth to expect an independent exhibitor to do something they themselves are unable to do. Percentage creates a partnership between exhibitor and distributor for a particular picture. The distributor should, therefore, take his chances just as the exhibitor takes them. If a picture cannot be put over because either of its poor quality, of poor advertising material, or of inadequate aid from the distributor's exploitation department, the distributor should be willing to sustain losses in the same way as is the exhibitor.

In view of the fact that some of the companies have discontinued insisting upon a minimum guarantee, the Allied committee should insist that the elimination of this annoying, sometimes disastrous for the exhibitor, policy should be discontinued generally.

7. *Score Charges:* Allied insists that there should be no score charges. The distributors finally offered to make this charge an individual company policy, perhaps to be considered with the film rentals, at least on flat-rental pictures.

HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that, if the score charges are to be dropped on flat-rental pictures, they should be dropped also on percentage pictures. There is more reason why they should be dropped on percentage than there is on flat-rental pictures, on account of the fact that, on percentage pictures, the distributor becomes, as said, the exhibitor's partner during the playing of that picture. The distributor should, therefore, furnish his show to the exhibitor complete. And furnishing it without the score charge is not furnishing a picture complete. As a matter of fact, this paper has always preached that, on percentage pictures, the distributor should furnish the picture, not only with the score charge paid, but also with the shorts required to complete the program.

Why not? If he wants a share of the gross receipts from a picture, he should furnish that picture as a complete program. He should do so, not only as a matter of justice, but also of common sense; it should be his business to see that the shorts put on the same program add to his feature's box-office value instead of subtracting from it.

8. *Coercive Selling:* Allied insisted that a threat to build, or to promote the building of, a theatre should not be employed to compel an exhibitor to buy a distributor's pictures. The distributors agreed on principle but were unwilling to let the local boards act as fact finders. Allied insisted that the arbitration boards be left to determine the matter.

9. *Minimum Admission Prices:* Allied insisted that the minimum-admission clause be struck from the contract, leaving the matter to individual negotiation. The distributors insisted that it be left in the contract. They say that they must have a "floor," below which admissions must not fall.

10. *Effective Date:* The distributors want the reforms agreed upon to take effect during the 1939-40 season. Allied insists that the tail-end of the 1938-39 season become subject to these reforms.

Negotiations were carried on with other exhibitor groups. These were conducted separately by common consent. No doubt these groups may have injected proposals that Allied did not discuss. These will, no doubt, be brought to the attention of the Allied committee in due time.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that, during the temporary adjournment of the conferences, the distributors have had time for better selection so that, when the conferences are resumed after putting the proposals in writing, the distributor committee will have prepared for submission to the exhibitor representatives concessions that will bring harmony in the industry, thus making the Government suit unnecessary.

## MYERS DENIES SPLIT IN ALLIED RANKS

At the Ohio exhibitors' convention in Columbus on the 15th and the 16th of this month, Mr. Abram F. Myers denied the press reports to the effect that there has been a split among the members of the Allied board of directors, or that a merger with MPTOA is contemplated, as it has been reported in some trade papers. He said that complete harmony prevails in the Allied ranks, and the trade paper reports is the first time that the Allied leaders have ever heard about a merger with MPTOA.



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Room 1812

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1938

No. 49

## "VARIETY" CELEBRATES ITS THIRD OF A CENTURY ANNIVERSARY

This month, "Variety," the well-known theatrical paper, is celebrating the Anniversary of its 33rd year of life.

"Variety" has rendered an inestimable service to the amusement world. The following are extracts from letters printed in the 25th Anniversary issue attesting to it; they were sent to the founder of this paper, the late Sime Silverman:

Mr. Karl Hoblitzel: "In point of courage and rugged character, 'Variety' stands out as a giant among pygmies."

Mr. J. J. Murdock: "'Variety' is no longer merely a mouthpiece of the show business. It has become a connecting link between the show business and those outside."

Mr. N. T. Granlund: "I go back a few years, when 'Variety' was only eight years old, and you didn't have as many gray hairs as you have now. I was a kid, Sime, new to Broadway, trying to make good at an unfamiliar job, as publicity director of the Loew circuit. Marcus Loew, the sweetest man that ever lived, introduced me to you, and asked you to help me. You did.

"Many a time you came to my office and helped me with suggestions and advice. . . .

"... Sime, I'll never forget the midnights we sat together in your deserted office while you labored far beyond the time your staff had scrambled. You helped me then, Sime, more than you'll ever know.

"You've been a grand guy to me, Sime. I only hope that I can sit down like this and write you another letter and tell you the same thing 25 years from now. . . ."

Mr. Joseph Leblang: "I had the pleasure of seeing 'Variety' born, and I have enjoyed watching it grow. . . I think you have served all of the show business with a deep understanding and a trust that has been inspiring.

"You have been a guide and a teacher. . . ."

Mr. Maurice Goodman: "You were always a fearless protagonist for the right as you saw it, and for the 'underdog' in the show world. These human qualities are in my judgment the basis of 'Variety's' preeminence in theatre journalism, and may it continue on its Golden Anniversary."

Mr. Samuel Goldwyn: "In congratulating you on your continued success, we, all of us in the industry, honor ourselves."

The spirit of Sime Silverman still guides the policies of "Variety," for most of those who are now writing for it are the pupils of Sime.

"Variety" is an institution in the entire show world. And it has done a lot for the motion picture industry. It was the first paper to start reviewing pictures; it started reviewing them thirty-three years ago, with the first issue.

HARRISON'S REPORTS congratulates "Variety" on its One-Third Century Anniversary and hopes that it will have the pleasure of congratulating it also on its Golden Anniversary.—P. S. HARRISON.

## THE DRIVE FOR THE FEDERATED JEWISH CHARITIES

Mr. Jack Alicote, publisher of Film Daily, has again been requested by Messrs. Dave Bernstein, of Loew's, Inc., and Major Albert Warner, of Warner Bros., to head the Trade Publications Committee of the Amusement Division for the Federated Jewish Charities' annual drive, which is now in progress.

"Having been associated with this movement for several years," says Mr. Alicote, "I can assure you that no charity cause is more worthy, more efficient, nor more in need of enthusiastic co-operation."

The writer agrees with Mr. Alicote and feels that every member of the motion picture industry should help to the limit of his power, because this year more than any other year the need is great.

Contributions should be sent directly to Mr. Dave Bernstein, c/o Loew's, Inc., 1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

## "THE EXHIBITOR" CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

"The Exhibitor," of Philadelphia, became twenty years old last month, and Mr. Jay Emanuel, its owner, feels that he is entitled to celebrate. "Amen!" say we.

The first issue of "Vine Street" the "father" of "The Exhibitor," was dated November 15, 1918—just seven and one-half months before HARRISON'S REPORTS was born.

Mr. Emanuel deserves congratulations for another reason—for making "The Exhibitor" a weekly publication from the biweekly that it was.

Friends of Mr. Emanuel, along with his subscribers, have been watching, I am sure, his progress with a sort of paternalistic interest; it is natural for any regular human being to want to see his friends make good.

HARRISON'S REPORTS joins every one of his friends and every one of his subscribers in wishing Mr. Emanuel and "The Exhibitor" a continued happy and prosperous career for many more years.



### "Sixty Glorious Years" with Anna Neagle and Anton Walbrook

(RKO, Rel. date not set; time, 94½ min.)

This is practically a remake of "Victoria the Great," produced and released last year, except that this version has been photographed in technicolor. True, the production is excellent, and the acting, as in the previous picture, superb; but one wonders why it was made, as far as American audiences are concerned, for "Victoria the Great" amply covered the subject of the Queen's reign. There is nothing in this version that is new or surprising. As a matter of fact, the continuity was smoother in the first picture, for in this version the action shifts from one episode to another with rapidity. As with the first picture, its appeal will be directed mainly to class audiences; and since "Victoria the Great" did only from Good to Fair at the box-office there is no reason to believe that "Sixty Glorious Years" will produce better box-office results, particularly since the same players appear in it.

The story opens with the marriage of Queen Victoria to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg. Both having strong wills, they clash at times; but they soon patch up their quarrels, for they loved each other devotedly. Albert is miserable because the English people misunderstood him and treated him as an outsider. When he suggests the building of a crystal palace in which to house a great international exhibition, he is criticized for his idea, but, with the backing of the Duke of Wellington, he is able to carry through his plans. These work out well. Finally the British people accept him. The years bring to the royal couple joys as well as sorrows; they raise a large family, are pleased with the romance of their eldest daughter, go through many sorrowful moments as a result of the Crimean War, which they opposed, are saddened by the death of Wellington, and feel happy when the war ends. When Albert dies, Queen Victoria goes into retirement; she emerges after many years to take an active part in political affairs. Having great respect for Disraeli, she approves of his foresight in purchasing the control of the Suez Canal. The years pass pleasantly. The Queen is thrilled at the Diamond Jubilee. She dies at the age of eighty-one, mourned by the entire nation.

Miles Malleon and Charles DeGrandcourt wrote the story, and they and Robert Vansittart, the screen play; Herbert Wilcox directed and produced it. In the cast are C. Aubrey Smith, Walter Rilla, Charles Carson, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Say It in French" with Olympe Bradna and Ray Milland

(Paramount, November 25; time, 71 min.)

A delightful light comedy, suitable for adults. It is somewhat risqué in spots, both in dialogue and situation, without being vulgar. As a matter of fact, some of these situations are so comical that they should provoke uproarious laughter. Although the plot is novel, one's attention is held throughout, for the performances are spirited, the romance is charming, and the action is fast-moving:—

When Ray Milland returns from France with his bride (Olympe Bradna), he learns that his father was on the verge of bankruptcy and that the only thing that could save him would be to obtain the contract for the building of three new ships; this he could accomplish if Milland would announce his engagement to wealthy Irene Hervey, whose guardian controlled the ship company. Miss Bradna suggests that Milland keep their marriage a secret, and that he announce his engagement to Miss Hervey to help his father along. Miss Hervey is agreeable, since she loved some one else, but did not want her guardian to know about it. In the meantime, Miss Bradna is mistaken for a servant and, in order to be near Milland, decides to accept the position of maid to Milland's mother (Janet Beecher). Things, however, come to a head when Miss Hervey decides that she wanted to marry Milland; he is compelled to tell her about his wife. She is amused and insists on helping him. Through a ruse, they obtain the ship-building contract from her guardian. Milland then rushes home with the good news, only to find that Miss Bradna, who thought he had deserted her, was on her way back to Europe. Milland rushes aboard the ship; but Miss Bradna, who had decided not to sail, shouts the good news to him from the pier as the ship pulls out.

Jacques Deval wrote the story, and Frederick Jackson, the screen play; Andrew L. Stone directed and produced it. In the cast are Mary Carlisle, Holmes Herbert, Wm. Collier, Sr., Walter Kingsford, and Erik Rhodes.

Not for children. Good for adults. Class B.

### "Secrets of a Nurse" with Edmund Lowe, Helen Mack and Dick Foran

(Universal, December 9; time, 74½ min.)

A fairly good program melodrama, well acted and intelligently directed. It holds one's interest throughout, due to the sympathy one feels for the hero, a victim of gangsters, and for the heroine, who suffers thereby. Although the ending is somewhat hard to believe, it has dramatic power and holds one in suspense. The triangle romance is handled in good taste:—

Edmund Lowe, a famous criminal lawyer, falls in love with Helen Mack, a nurse at the hospital where he had been a patient for a time; she does not, however, return his love. When Dick Foran, a prizefighter, is brought into the hospital suffering from wounds inflicted upon him in his last bout, during which he had been framed by a crooked gambler (Leon Ames), Miss Mack falls in love with him; she pulls him out of danger. They make plans, one of the plans being that Foran was to give up fighting. This enrages Foran's manager (Paul Hurst), who had been wiped out by betting on Foran and by hospital bills; Foran promises to pay him back. Lowe gets Foran a job as busboy at a hotel. Hurst, who had suddenly realized the truth about Ames' connection with the fight, goes to see him at the hotel. In a quarrel that ensues, Ames' henchman kills Hurst; Foran, who had gone up to the room with ice, finds the body. The murderer knocks him unconscious and then puts the gun in his hand. Foran is naturally held for the murder. Lowe defends him; but it is useless. Foran is convicted and sentenced to die in the electric chair. But at the last minute, Ames, who was dying from a gun shot, confesses in the presence of Lowe and a judge. Miss Mack feels that this was a miracle for, according to the doctor, Ames had been dead for five minutes. Foran is freed.

Quentin Reynolds wrote the story, and Tom Lenson and Lester Cole, the screen play; Arthur Lubin directed it, and Burt Kelly produced it. In the cast are Samuel Hinds, David Oliver, Clarence Muse, and others.

Unsuitable for children because of the murders. Class B.

### "Artists and Models Abroad" with Jack Benny and Joan Bennett

(Paramount, December 30; time, 94½ min.)

A good comedy with music. There are not as many musical numbers in this as there were in the previous "Artists and Models," but that is not important, for it goes in more for comedy than for "big" numbers. The few musical numbers are, however, good. But lavishness has not been overlooked in the settings; one scene, in which the creations of famous Parisian dressmakers are paraded, to musical accompaniment, by beautiful models, should thrill women because of the styles. Jack Benny, in his usual nonchalant manner, is as amusing as ever; and the compromising situations into which he gets his troupe are the cause for much of the laughter. The romance is pleasant:—

Stranded in Paris with his American show troupe, Benny is at a loss as to what to do. He decides that the only way they could get back home would be to get themselves deported; but first they have to find a place in which to stay. They pick a cheap hotel and talk the manager out of an advance payment. While out trying to dig up some money, Benny is stopped at an outdoor cafe by Joan Bennett, who asks him to pay her check since she had left her money at home. Not knowing that she was the daughter of an American oil millionaire (Charley Grapewin), he starts giving her a lecture about picking up men; he then offers to take her in with his troupe. Fed up with the restrictions her aunt (Mary Boland) had placed on her freedom and disliking the man her aunt had picked as her fiance, Miss Bennett jumps at the opportunity; she telephones the news to Miss Boland. Grapewin, who had arrived in Paris unexpectedly, goes after his daughter; Benny upbraids him for neglecting Miss Bennett, and gives him permission to stay with the troupe. They all have an exciting time trying to find a place where to sleep, for they had been locked out of the hotel; they dodge the police, and imitate Russians in order to get employment as models. Benny believes that Grapewin was a swindler and spoils an oil deal he was trying to put through. But when he learns the truth, he faints; Grapewin is grateful, for as matters turn out his oil properties were worth more than he had believed. Miss Bennett convinces Benny that money should not interfere with their romance.

Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse wrote the story, and they and Ken Englund, the screen play; Mitchell Leisen directed it, and Arthur Hornblow, Jr., produced it. In the cast are the Yacht Club Boys, Fritz Feld, Phyllis Kennedy, Joyce Compton, Monty Woolley, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Peck's Bad Boy with the Circus" with  
Tommy Kelly, Ann Gillis and  
Edgar Kennedy**

(RKO, November 25; time, 64 min.)

A fair comedy for the juvenile trade; it is doubtful if adults will be entertained by it, for the story is thin and deals mostly with children. But the youngsters should enjoy it fairly well because of the circus background, as well as of the young hero's exciting adventures. One of the most amusing situations is that in which the boys at the circus feed the lions with sleeping pills, thereby making them drowsy, thus spoiling the act of the lion tamer. Billy Gilbert and Edgar Kennedy arouse laughter by their antics:—

Tommy Kelly looks forward to his trip to camp, there to compete in an obstacle race. He had been the winner for two summers, and if he could win again he would be the owner of the silver loving cup. His parents go off on a fishing trip and leave him ten dollars for his fare, promising to meet him at the camp. But Tommy and his friends go to the circus where they are caught sneaking in; feeling generous, Tommy spends his ten dollars buying tickets and candy. He helps Ann Gillis, a young bareback rider, and her mother out of a predicament, when the manager's wife (Benita Hume) tries to prevent Ann from going on with her act. Tommy takes her place. In order to get to camp in time to compete in the race, Tommy accepts Kennedy's suggestion that he allow him to race him there in the circus chariot. After a thrilling ride, Tommy arrives just in time to start, and, to the joy of his parents, wins the race and the cup.

The plot centers around the characters created by G. W. Peck. Al Martin, David Boehm, and Robert Neville wrote the screen play, Edward F. Cline directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. In the cast are Spanky McFarland, Louise Beavers, Nana Bryant, Grant Mitchell, and others. Suitability, Class A.

**"The Shining Hour" with Joan Crawford,  
Melvyn Douglas, Robert Young  
and Margaret Sullivan**

(MGM, November 18; time, 76 min.)

A strong emotional drama, suitable only for adults. It is competently acted and directed and, considering the drawing power of the combined star names, will probably do well at the box-office. But it is not pleasurable entertainment; this is due to the romantic conflict that involves two brothers and the wife of one. It is not inspiring to see a man, who himself is married to a charming woman, trying to win the love of his brother's wife. Nor is the story particularly cheerful; almost throughout the characters are moping or complaining; and the actions of one, the sister of the two brothers, are malicious. The story ends, however, on a happier note, with complete understanding between the characters:—

When Melvyn Douglas, wealthy gentleman farmer, marries Joan Crawford, a night club entertainer, his old-maid sister (Fay Bainter) feels certain that the marriage could not last. She treats Miss Crawford in an insulting manner, and tries to make her as uncomfortable as possible. Miss Bainter notices that her younger brother (Robert Young) was paying too much attention to Miss Crawford. She brings this to the attention of Young's wife (Margaret Sullivan); at first Miss Sullivan is annoyed at Miss Bainter's suspicions, but she soon realizes that they were true. Miss Crawford tries to fight against her feelings for Young. She looks forward to the time when she and Douglas would move into their own home, which they were building nearby. Even on the night of the housewarming party, Miss Bainter sees fit to insult Miss Crawford, telling her to go away. That night Miss Crawford, who had permitted Young to kiss her, pleads with Douglas to take her away. This so annoys Miss Bainter that she sets fire to the new house. Miss Sullivan, feeling that Young and Miss Crawford should be free to go away together, runs into the burning house; but Miss Crawford rushes after her and saves her. When the excitement dies down, Miss Crawford knows the conflict was over. She makes Young realize that he loved his wife, and that she really loved her own husband. She prepares to go away; but Douglas rushes after her, at the advice of Miss Bainter, who felt that she had wronged her.

The plot was adapted from the play by Keith Winter; Jane Murnin and Ogden Nash wrote the screen play, Frank Borzage directed it, and Joseph L. Mankiewicz produced it. In the cast are Allyn Joslyn, Frank Albertson, Hattie McDaniel, Harry Barris, and others.

Unsuitable for children or adolescents. Class B.

**"Comet over Broadway" with Kay Francis,  
Ian Hunter and John Littel**

(First Nat'l, December 3; time, 69 min.)

A fair program drama. In adapting it from the Faith Baldwin novel, the screenwriter made several changes; these weakened the story dramatically. It may, however, appeal to women, who will sympathize with the heroine and admire her for the sacrifices she makes. One or two situations stir the emotions; but for the most part the plot is developed according to formula, and the dialogue is stilted:—

Kay Francis, wife of a small-town garage owner (John Littel), dreams of becoming an actress. When a famous New York actor (Ian Keith) arrives at the town for a vacation, Miss Francis goes to see him. Littel follows her there, and in a quarrel with Keith accidentally kills him; he is sentenced to life imprisonment. Feeling that she was to blame, Miss Francis promises to work hard to obtain his freedom. Taking her child with her, she leaves the small town and seeks employment in the theatre. She starts with a carnival show, and then goes to burlesque. In order to better herself, she agrees to team up with one of the men in a vaudeville act, but is compelled to go without her child. She turns the baby over to Minna Gombell, a retired burlesque player, who adored the child. Ian Hunter, a producer, falls in love with her. Not wishing to make him unhappy, she goes to London, where she becomes popular. After a four year separation, Miss Francis is reunited with her child, but she is unhappy, for the child (Sybil Jason) thought Miss Gombell was her mother. Hunter arrives in London and induces her to return to New York. Needing a large sum of money to obtain her husband's release, she agrees. The play is a success; but Miss Francis is unhappy for she realized she loved Hunter. When Littel is finally released, Miss Francis and her child, who had been told the truth, leave to join him. Hunter tells her to count on him as a friend.

Faith Baldwin wrote the novel, and Mark Hellinger, the screen play; Busby Berkeley directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Leona Maricle, Donald Crisp, and Melville Cooper.

Not for children. Class B.

**"Little Tough Guys in Society" with  
Mischa Auer, Mary Boland and  
Edward Everett Horton**

(Universal, November 25; time, 72 min.)

A very good comedy, of the boisterous type. Most of the laughter is provoked by the antics of six young boys, designated as the "Little Tough Guys," when they arrive at a wealthy country home. The boys that comprise this gang are not the same as those who appeared in the first "Tough Guy" picture; only one from the first group remains. Nevertheless, they are just as adept as the others in acting tough and slapping each other around. To offset this rough comedy, there are Miss Boland, Auer, and Horton, who, in their quiet way, manage to make the audience laugh each time they appear. The closing scenes, in which the "tough guys" redeem themselves, are pretty exciting:—

After breaking up the contents of a glass factory from which their fathers had been shut out due to over-production, the six boys find it necessary to hide from the police. They go to the neighborhood boys' club and read a notice about a rich woman's wanting to give six boys a vacation at her country home. Not being able to convince the club director that they should be sent, they think up a scheme, with the help of Harold Huber, whereby the director believes the offer had been withdrawn. They manage to get the tickets, and then leave for the country estate, owned by Miss Boland; she had sent for six boys at the suggestion of Auer, a psychoanalyst, who believed that her spoiled son (Jackie Searl), who refused to get out of bed, needed some stimulation. The moment the boys arrive things start happening; but they work wonders for Jackie. Everything is spoiled when Huber arrives with his pals to stage a holdup; he implicates the boys. But they show their honesty by attacking Huber and his men during the robbery, and holding them until the police arrive. They then decide to go back to the city to face the charges against them. Jackie is sorry to see them go.

Edward Eliscu and Mortimer Offner wrote the original screen play; Erle C. Kenton directed it, and Max H. Golden produced it. In the cast are Helen Parrish, Frankie Thomas, Harris Berger, Hally Chester, Charles Duncan, David Gorcey, William Benedict, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



## THANKS, PITTSBURGH!

The following resolution was passed by the Pittsburgh zone independent exhibitors at their recent annual convention:

"Whereas, P. S. Harrison, the editor of the trade publication known as HARRISON'S REPORTS, has at all times given honest, truthful and competent news reports; and

"Whereas, we feel that he has at all times been consistent in his efforts towards aiding the independent exhibitors, giving them freely of the space in HARRISON'S REPORTS; now, therefore, be it

"Resolved, that the members of the Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Western Pennsylvania, Incorporated, in their Eighteenth Annual Convention assembled, do hereby re-affirm their faith in P. S. Harrison and his paper, HARRISON'S REPORTS; and be it further

"Resolved, that we recommend to our members that they give Mr. Harrison their support and cooperation by subscribing to HARRISON'S REPORTS; and be it further

"Resolved, that this resolution be made a part of the permanent record of this organization, and that a copy thereof be sent to Mr. Harrison."

## A SERIES OF TELEVISION ARTICLES WILL BE PRINTED SOON IN THIS PAPER

According to a dispatch in the November 28 issue of *Motion Picture Daily* from Hollywood, the Research Council of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has rendered an opinion to the effect that in all likelihood television and motion pictures will be in competition with each other.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has gathered from television experts the necessary material for a series of articles on television with a view to acquainting the industry with whether or not television is about to become a competitor to motion pictures, and whether or not the exhibitor should be looking forward to installing in his theatre television equipment.

The first article of the series should appear within two weeks.

## TRUER WORDS HAVE NEVER BEEN SPOKEN

Mr. Howard Barnes, the motion picture critic of the New York *Herald Tribune*, said the following in his November 27 column:

"When the screen handles subject matter which is neither significant nor fresh, it has a way of doing so with a flourish. Technical tricks are substituted for sound dramatic situations, acting capers for valid make-believe and production pomp for honest emotional appeal. The practice has a touch of apology in it, but I am afraid that it is more often prompted by the belief that a lot of front will hoodwink the public. It has in the past and it will probably continue to do so for some time to come, but it is my hunch that film-goers are catching on to the deception. Unless a motion picture has a core of honesty and essential dramatic

vigor, showy externals are only apt to make its deficiencies more apparent. . . ."

Mr. Barnes then goes on to illustrate his point by giving some examples of story dishonesty.

Truer words have never been spoken. HARRISON'S REPORTS has had occasion to comment on the same thing repeatedly. It is not long since it commented upon "Men with Wings,"—on the fact that the story is artificial, with hardly much of importance in it, and yet the producers tried to raise the story to great importance by expedients. The result is that not many picture-goers will be fooled by the substitution of cheap melodramatic situations for real drama, and by the dressing up of the picture with color further to conceal the defects.

And this is only one instance of this kind.

I don't know whether the producers will pay any more attention to Mr. Barnes' constructive criticism than they have paid to other criticisms of this kind, made by this paper as well as by many other papers. But the exhibitors owe Mr. Barnes a debt of gratitude for speaking his mind so clearly.

## REGARDING THE "MOVIE SEASON" CAMPAIGN

In the November 19 issue, the fact that some organizations are selling to the public answers to the Movie Quiz contest for fifteen cents was revealed, and in the issue of November 12, that an official of Donahue & Coe had written letters to newspapers refusing to give them advertisements unless they induced the local theatre owners to subscribe to the contest.

The object of commenting critically on these two incidents was, first, to induce the proponents of the campaign to abandon contests in future campaigns, and, secondly, to discourage the heads of the committee that is conducting the campaign from permitting the advertisers to employ high-pressure salesmanship methods on newspaper publishers.

So far as the campaign itself is concerned, you have read, I am sure, my views on it and how much good it has, in my opinion, done to the theatre box offices, for I expressed these views in an editorial that appeared in the November 5 issue of this paper.

The more information I gather the more I am convinced that the campaign has done much good to the industry, not only morally but also financially: morally, because it has made the majority of the newspapers friendly toward the industry; financially because it has helped the box offices generally.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that the producers will heed the recommendations made in the report submitted by Mr. Howard Dietz, of MGM, to Mr. George Schaefer, and establish a permanent committee to carry on the campaign continuously. We may disagree with the producers on many points, and we may condemn certain policies of theirs, but we can agree with them in at least one point—the need to increase movie patronage. And establishing a committee to carry on a continuous campaign of good will among, not only the newspapers, but also the public, cannot help increasing movie patronage. Other industries are doing it; why not the motion picture industry?



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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1938

No. 50

## The Television Problem in Motion Picture Theatres—No. 1

From time to time there have been printed in the newspapers news items dealing with the progress television has so far made.

Some of these items have stated that the development of television has so progressed that its installation in motion picture theatres is only a matter of months. This naturally has disturbed a large number of exhibitors, who fear that the advent of television will put their investments into jeopardy.

Since 1929 HARRISON'S REPORTS has published occasionally articles dealing with the progress of television; and in every one of them the exhibitor has been assured that television, as a competitor to motion pictures, is still far off.

With a view to presenting to the theatre owners of the country fresh information as to how far television has progressed, the writer has interviewed television experts, among whom is Dr. Alfred N. Goldsmith, considered as one of the most active workers in that field and an authority in it.

The questions that I asked of Dr. Goldsmith and of the other experts are questions that would be asked by any exhibitor, were he to have a similar opportunity. As to the answers, these are not in the exact language of the experts; but they convey their views and thoughts accurately.

**Q. 1:** Has television been yet perfected to a point of being compared favorably with motion pictures?

**A.** The largest television picture that has so far been produced is about six by eight feet. It is as bright as the normal motion picture, or even brighter. In sharpness, or "definition," and detail, however, it does not yet come up to the motion picture standard. Medium shots of several persons in a group and of small sets, as well as closeups, come through well; but long shots, scenes of crowds, pageants, elaborate architecture, landscapes with detail scenery, and the like, do not come through so satisfactorily.

It has been stated that a six by eight foot television picture is satisfactory for an audience consisting of anywhere from six to eight hundred persons, but one would be more accurate if one were to say that a picture of such a size would be more satisfactory to an audience consisting only of between three and five hundred persons, even though recently a satisfactory private exhibition was given in England, in one of the British-Gaumont theatres, to an audience consisting of seven hundred and fifty persons. The event televised was the Derby, the famous horse race. According to reliable information, the audience, many of whom had placed

bets on the horses, became so excited when they saw the horses coming down the stretch that many of them, women preponderating, jumped up and yelled as people usually do at a race course. The same event, reproduced on the screen from film, was shown to a general audience that evening, but the response was only normal, even though the picture was of far better quality.

One must bear in mind, however, that this was the first time that such an event had been televised, and the audience reacted to it most favorably; it is assumed that, if so large a number of persons were to see so small a picture week after week, the reaction may not be so great. Such was the case with the first talking pictures: at first, a talking picture, whether good or poor, (and they were mostly poor) shown under any conditions, would do; but as time went on and the novelty wore off, the public became very discriminating, and exhibition conditions and sound reproduction had to be improved. And so had the quality of talking pictures.

**Q. 2:** When you speak about the picture's "sharpness," or "definition," what do you mean by it?

**A.** The "sharpness" or "definition" of the picture is the wealth of detail it can show or the sum total of information it can give. This depends on the number of lines the picture consists of. Television pictures are classified in accordance with the number of their lines, for the television picture is projected, not as a whole, as is the case with motion pictures, but in narrow and adjacent horizontal "strips," or "lines," each strip or line following the other so rapidly that the eye sees a complete picture. If the picture is projected in 441 lines, as is the case with television pictures in the United States at present, it is classified as a 441-line picture. On that basis, the "sharpness," or "definition," of a standard-film motion picture, when contrasted to a 441-line television picture, is probably somewhere between 1,500 and 2,000 lines, or approximately from four to five times sharper.

**Q. 3:** Can the art of television produce as good entertainment as can the art of motion pictures?

**A.** Since the entertainment value of a picture depends on the quality of the story material, it is possible to get real entertainment into pictures that have a lesser degree of sharpness than that of the motion picture. Television pictures for the theatre may eventually be transmitted with a greater number of lines; for example, 729. If it should so happen, it will be almost impossible for an audience to notice any marked difference in sharpness between television pictures and motion pictures.

(Continued next week)



**"The Cowboy and the Lady" with  
Gary Cooper and Merle Oberon**  
(*United Artists, Nov. 17; time, 90 min.*)

A fairly good romantic comedy. Its box-office appeal will, however, have to depend mostly on the popularity of the stars, particularly of Mr. Cooper, for the story is thin, familiar, and at times it drags. Gary Cooper and Merle Oberon give good performances, in spite of the fact that they are handicapped by trite material; but the talents of Patsy Kelly are completely wasted in a part that gives her little to do or to say. One or two situations stand out. The situation in which Cooper, a simple cowboy, puts a group of wealthy snobs in their place, is one of the two. The romance is developed according to formula, with misunderstandings and eventual reconciliation.

Fearing that his daughter (Miss Oberon) might become involved in a scandal owing to a raid on a night club, which she had attended with her fun-loving uncle (Harry Davenport), thus ruining his chances of receiving the party nomination for United States President, Henry Kolker insists that she leave for Palm Beach with her two maids (Miss Kelly and Mabel Todd). Since the season had not yet started, and there was no company for her, Miss Oberon is bored. Learning that her two maids were going to keep a date with two cowboys from the rodeo, Miss Oberon induces them to take her along. She is paired with Cooper, who believes her story to the effect that she was a lady's maid. After a hectic courtship they marry; Miss Oberon goes to Galveston with the rodeo. Receiving a telephone call from Miss Kelly, warning her that her father and important guests were arriving, Miss Oberon rushes home, promising to meet Cooper at his Montana ranch. She tells her father and uncle what had happened; her uncle cheers her, but her father is horrified. Since his wife did not arrive at the appointed time, Cooper goes in search of her; he is shocked when he learns the truth. He tells Kolker and his daughter what he thought of them, and then leaves. Realizing how inhuman his ambitions had made him, Kolker gives up his political hopes and, in company with Davenport and Miss Oberon, flies to Montana, arriving there before Cooper; reconciliation follows.

Leo McCarey and Frank R. Adams wrote the story, and S. N. Behrman and Sonya Levien, the screen play; H. C. Potter directed it, and Samuel Goldwyn produced it. In the cast are Walter Brennan, Fuzzy Knight, Emma Dunn, Berton Churchill, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Nancy Drew, Detective" with  
Bonita Granville, Frankie Thomas  
and John Litel**

(*Warner Bros., Nov. 26; time, 65 min.*)

An entertaining mystery melodrama, with a comedy angle. In spite of the fact that the story is far-fetched, it holds one's attention well owing to the engaging performances of Bonita Granville and Frankie Thomas. Most of the laughter is provoked by the artlessness of the two youngsters, who attempt to solve a mystery without police aid. The action becomes pretty exciting when they come in contact with the gangsters, and one is held in suspense in the closing scenes, when they are caught by the gangsters snooping around the hideout. There is no romance:—

When an elderly graduate who had promised to endow her school with her fortune of \$250,000 fails to show up at the appointed time, Bonita feels certain that something had gone wrong. She comes upon a clue, which she turns over to her father (John Litel), a lawyer, but he instructs her to give it to the police. She takes into her confidence Frankie and asks him to help her. At first he is unwilling, but when the case becomes interesting he is eager to go through with it. The two youngsters find that the elderly woman had been made a captive by a gang of desperate criminals, who were trying to compel her to sign away her fortune to them; her lawyer was in on the deal. When the gangsters find Bonita and Frankie at the hideout, they lock them up in the cellar. Frankie finds an old radio set and sends out an SOS. His call is heard and the police, together with Litel, rush to the hideout. They round up the criminals and save the three prisoners. Bonita is praised for her good work.

The plot was adapted from the novel by Carolyn Keene. Kenneth Gamet wrote the screen play, William Clemens directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Dick Purcell, James Stevenson, Frank Orth, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"While New York Sleeps" with  
Michael Whalen and Jean Rogers**

(*20th Century-Fox, Jan. 6; time, 61 min.*)

A fast-moving program murder mystery melodrama, with comedy and musical interpolations; it is the second picture in the "Roving Reporter" series. Although the story is not novel, it holds one's attention well, for the story is developed in an interesting way; and it keeps one in suspense, too, since both the hero and the heroine are in danger, at one time of becoming involved with the criminals. The romance in this instance is given a new twist, for the hero fails to win the heroine:—

Michael Whalen, a newspaper reporter, is in love with Jean Rogers, an entertainer at a night club owned by Harold Huber. Suspecting that Huber had something to do with the theft of bonds and with the murder of his pal, an insurance agent, he spends most of his time at the cafe, trying to discover evidence. This annoys Huber. Knowing that Miss Rogers was angry at Whalen for trying to break up her romance with her hometown sweetheart, Huber suggests that they play a practical joke on him by pretending that Miss Rogers had shot him (Huber). He felt sure that he, Whalen, would naturally give the story to his paper and be humiliated when the truth would be made known. Everything works out as planned, except that Huber is actually killed, not by Miss Rogers, but by his own henchman, who wanted the bonds for himself. Eventually Whalen uncovers the plot, gets the evidence he wanted, and recovers the stolen bonds. But he is disappointed, for Miss Rogers marries her hometown sweetheart.

Frank Fenton and Lynn Root wrote the story, and Frances Hyland and Albert Ray, the screen play; H. Bruce Humberstone directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Chick Chandler, Robert Kellard, Joan Woodbury, Marc Lawrence, Sidney Blackmer, and others.

Unsuitable for children because of the murders. Class B.



### **"I Am a Criminal" with John Carroll and Martin Spellman**

(Monogram, Dec. 14; time, 73 min.)

A deeply appealing human interest story, centering around the regeneration of a racketeer through his association with a fine young boy. Both in production and acting it is easily comparable to most of the major company output. Although all the players give commendable performances, it is Martin Spellman, in the part of the young boy, who raises the picture to its high entertainment level; he acts and speaks his lines with assurance, and has such an appealing personality that the audience takes him to its heart. There are several situations that so stir one's emotions that they cause tears. The situation in which the boy refuses to believe that he is to be parted from his benefactor is one of the most appealing.

Booked on a manslaughter charge in an accidental death that occurred in his gambling casino, but released on \$20,000 bail, Carroll decides to follow his attorney's advice, and engages a press agent to build up public sympathy for him. In line with this plan, Carroll takes into his home an orphan newspaper boy (Martin Spellman). In a short time the boy and he develop a deep affection for each other. Deserted by his girl friend (Kay Linaker) and his attorney, Carroll decides to jump bail and hide out in a country place; he tells the boy that he would have to stay home, but the boy hides in the car and is discovered when Carroll is far away. Yet he is happy to see him. They stop at an inn, conducted by Mary Kornman. Since the season had not yet started, they are the first guests. Martin telephones to Carroll's housekeeper to send him his bicycle. Miss Linaker, who had called at the house, notices the address on the tag and informs the District Attorney. When the officials arrive at the inn, Martin, in an effort to help Carroll escape, rushes down to the lake to row a boat to a certain spot where Carroll would meet him. But he falls in the lake and, not knowing how to swim, struggles. Carroll rushes to his rescue, even though he knew that by so doing he would be captured. Carroll decides that it would be best to serve his sentence; he promises to return for Martin and for Miss Kornman, with whom he had fallen in love. Martin bids him a tearful goodbye.

Harrison Jacobs wrote the story, and John Krafft, the screen play; William Nigh directed it, and E. B. Derr produced it. In the cast are Craig Reynolds, May Beatty, and Robert Fiske.

The regeneration makes it suitable for children. Class A.

### **"Pygmalion" with Leslie Howard and Wendy Hiller**

(MGM, Rel. date not set; time, 86 min.)

This is one of the most brilliant pictures to come from England; but it is entertainment chiefly for class audiences. The story is excellent, the dialogue intelligent, and the acting, particularly of Wendy Hiller, of superior artistry; they should be appreciated by intelligent patrons. But, for the masses, the picture lacks action, it is too "talky," and the players, aside from Leslie Howard, are unknown; the British accents are too pronounced. Class audiences should, however, find it stimulating entertainment for, in addition to a novel story, the picture offers moments of human appeal and of high comedy that will be remembered long.

In the development of the plot, Leslie Howard, a

professor of phonetics, makes a wager with Scotts Sunderland, another expert in phonetics, that he could take Wendy Hiller, a vulgar slum girl, whose diction was very poor, and train her to speak so correctly and to conduct herself in society so well that he could pass her off as a Duchess. The experiment so intrigues Howard, who was at best self-sufficient and egotistical, that he, overlooking the fact that Miss Hiller was a human being, treats her as if she were a machine. After six months of hard work, Howard takes Miss Hiller to an important diplomatic ball, which was to be attended by the Queen. So well poised is Miss Hiller, and so beautiful does she look, that she attracts the attention even of the Queen. Howard and his friend return home elated; but Miss Hiller is heartbroken, for she had fallen in love with Howard, who completely disregarded her. Unable to control herself any longer, she tells him what she thought of him and leaves. The following morning Howard goes in search of her, and is frantic when he cannot find her; but he finally locates her at his mother's apartment. She treats him with disdain, and informs him that she was going to marry a young society man. He returns to his apartment crestfallen. But his sorrow turns to joy when Miss Hiller goes back to him.

Bernard Shaw wrote the screen play from his own stage play. Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard directed it, and Gabriel Pascal produced it. In the cast are Wilfred Lawson, Marie Lohr, Jean Cadell, and others. Suitability, Class A.

### **"The Next Time I Marry" with Lucille Ball and James Ellison**

(RKO, Dec. 9; time, 64 min.)

A fair program comedy. The story itself is familiar and at times silly; yet there are several situations that provoke laughter. And, since the action is kept moving at a pretty fast pace, one's interest does not lag. As in comedies of this type, the story hasn't much human appeal; nor are the actions of the characters such as to awaken the spectator's sympathy. The performances are, however, satisfactory:—

Since the will of her father prevented her from marrying any one but an American citizen, Lucille Ball, who wanted to marry a Count (Lee Bowman), decides to first marry an American citizen, collect her legacy, and then divorce her American husband to marry the Count. James Ellison, an impoverished college graduate, agrees to marry Miss Ball for \$750. He is annoyed when the newspapers label him a Cinderella man; in order to prove that he was not after Miss Ball's money, he decides to instigate the Reno divorce proceedings himself. He forces Miss Ball to leave for Reno with him in his trailer, so as to prevent her from filing the papers first. Bowman follows them in his limousine and keeps Miss Ball company each time Ellison stops. When they get to Reno, complications arise; but finally Miss Ball decides she does not want a divorce. She is heartbroken to find that her uncle had annulled the marriage. Realizing that she loved Ellison, she tricks him into marrying her again, and then confesses her love for him; he is happy, for he loved her.

Thames Williamson wrote the story, and Dudley Nichols and John Twist, the screen play; Garson Kanin directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Granville Bates, Manton Morland, Florence Lake, Arthur Hoyt, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



## THE TRADE PRACTICES CONFERENCES

On December 2, the distributor committee on trade practices completed the memorandum that was to contain the maximum concessions the producers made to the exhibitors during the conferences, and mailed a copy to each of the interested exhibitor bodies.

The statement issued by Mr. W. F. Rodgers, acting for the Distributor Committee, reads as follows:

"The Distributor's Committee on trade practices has today forwarded to the interested exhibitor bodies a memorandum of the understandings reached in principle at the conferences conducted by their respective Committees.

"To cover all subjects considered as national in their scope, it has been necessary to synchronize the thoughts expressed by the different theatre groups and the draft form of memorandum represents only such subjects, it being the belief that another and subsequent method will apply to those topics that are purely local in their application.

"Every subject of general importance involving trade practices has been discussed fully, and we believe the suggested means of solution will create a better understanding between all branches of our industry."

In view of the fact that Allied has denied that any understanding was reached between distributors and exhibitors, as Mr. Rodgers' release speaks of, the reproduction of the statement that was issued by Col. H. A. Cole in Chicago on November 4, immediately after the adjournment of the Distributor and the exhibitor committee meeting, seems necessary so as to keep the record clear. Here it is:

"The distributors' committee headed by Wm. F. Rodgers and the Allied committee headed by H. A. Cole, resumed negotiations in Chicago on Thursday and the deliberations were continued through Friday morning.

"All subjects brought forward by both sides have been fully discussed. The Allied committee has received from the distributors' committee the maximum concessions which the distributors feel that they can yield. Publication of the details must await final action by the several interested groups based on a written statement setting forth all the details.

"There being no occasion for further oral discussion at this time, meetings were suspended to enable a drafting committee to reduce to writing all the matters discussed including the details of the industry machinery which has been proposed for interpreting and applying the fair trade practices under consideration.

"When and if a satisfactory document has been evolved, it will, following a resolution of the Allied board of directors, be reported back to the board for final action."

Notice that this statement mentions nowhere "understanding," or "agreement."

When the trade papers, following the issuing of the Cole statement, took it upon themselves to state that "Distributors and Allied agree on reforms," Allied, through its Washington office, retorted that there had been "no agreement" reached. It stated that, in Chicago, "the Allied Committee had received from the Distributors the maximum concessions the latter felt they could yield and that these

were being reduced to writing after which they would be reported to Allied's Board of Directors for final action."

The Allied position is this: any concessions obtained by the Allied Committee from the distributors must be reported to the full board of directors of the Allied organization for final action. The Allied statement of November 8 said: "Not only does the Board want the final say, but in the nature of the case there could be no agreement at this time, since much will depend on the manner in which the commitments of the Distributors in reference to trade practices and the details of the arbitration machinery are set down on paper."

Mr. Rodgers' statement says: "Every subject of general importance involving trade practices has been discussed fully"; the Allied memorandum, which was discussed in the November 23 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, said that theatre divorcement was not discussed, because the distributor committee was unwilling to discuss the subject. Evidently the distributor committee, for which Mr. Rodgers, as said, speaks, does not consider that theatre divorcement is a "trade practice." If so, the Allied committee considers it an important matter to be settled before any agreement can be reached, for its November 8 statement, under the subheading, "Allied's Main Points Not Considered," said:

"An additional and important reason why Allied's Committee could not enter into an agreement at this time is that the two main planks in Allied's platform—(a) abolishment of compulsory block booking and blind selling and (b) separation of production and distribution from exhibition—have not been considered in the negotiations. The reason for this is that the Distributors' Committee announced that it was not authorized to go any further on one than to offer a small cancellation privilege and was not authorized to deal with the other at all."

It seems as if no agreement will be reached unless the producers withdraw from their position that theatre divorcement will not be discussed. So far as block booking and blind selling is concerned, if Allied should agree to the cancellation right that has already been conceded to the exhibitors, it will have to persuade the civic groups to accept it also; otherwise those civic groups that have committed themselves strongly for the abolition of block booking and blind selling may continue their efforts towards their complete abolition.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that, during the time the distributor committee was putting down into writing the concessions that the producers have so far offered, the producers have had time to reflect and that such a reflection has enabled them to change their minds about not discussing theatre divorcement. Unless they have reached such a decision, the independent exhibitors may prefer to wait for the outcome of the Government's suit, which aims to separate exhibition from production-distribution.

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## The Television Problem in Motion Picture Theatres—No. 2

Q. 4: Will television ever be developed to the point of being employed to reproduce even the feature motion pictures, or will it merely be an important "filler" on the moving picture program?

A. The appeal that comes from seeing an event at the very moment that it is occurring is considerably different from the appeal that comes from seeing an event subsequently; for example, when reproduced from a film record. Each type of presentation has its appeal, and each has its individual limitations. When the presentation of a news event by means of television is to be considered first, it should be clear that an audience would be excited by, for instance, the progress and ending of a football game, prize fight, or the like, more than it would be by the presentation of the same event at a later time. When one sees an important news event reproduced from a film record, one knows, as a rule, what the outcome has been, whereas when it is shown by means of television as it occurs, one is held in suspense as one watches its progress. Thus you will see that the presentation of current events by means of television has an advantage over motion pictures. On the other hand, it has also its disadvantages. In the first place, the event may, for most theatres, occur at a time when it could not fit into the program. Such should be the case frequently, for most outdoor events occur at day-time, when theatre audiences are not available in greatest numbers.

It is possible, however, that this difficulty may be overcome to a large extent by holding sport events at night, under artificial light. But even then, the presentation of these events by means of television at the time they occur may not be convenient for all theatres.

Another disadvantage in the presentation of concurrent events by television is the practical impossibility of editing them smoothly and artistically. It may also be impossible to coordinate the events that will come in from different parts of the country, so that they may be fitted into a well-ordered television program.

Such disadvantages do not, of course, prevail in the presentation of current events by means of film.

In reference to the time element, its unsuitability may be overcome in the transmission of political campaigns, conventions, visits of foreign celebrities, unveiling of monuments and the like, by their being sent to a central studio, and from there retransmitted to all subscribing theatres of that region.

But this brings up another problem—that of setting up a costly television distributing station or

"exchange," to serve theatres in a radius which, for the present, is approximately thirty miles.

Q. 5: Will the small town theatres be able to obtain television service?

A. Because of the fact that theatres in small towns are scattered over a wide area and a program transmitting television station could not reach more than a comparatively small number of them, it is doubtful whether a station can serve enough such theatres profitably. Neighborhood theatres in large cities, however, might be able to obtain such a service from the station that may be set up for the down-town theatres, no doubt at a smaller price than that which will be paid by the big theatres.

Still another disadvantage in television presentation will be the high cost of the equipment, and of its operation. It now is and may remain a complicated piece of mechanism, and will require a crew of at least two projectionists to operate; and if the theatre employs two projectionists for the operation of the moving picture machines, that theatre will, as you see, be compelled to maintain four projectionists. It might also be necessary to have two different screens, and even to place the television projecting equipment on the stage, back of the screen with translucent projection, or in the orchestra pit for front projection. These mechanical problems will increase costs, and unless the television material were exciting as well as interesting, the service reliable, transmitted without breakdowns and received faultlessly, it might hardly pay a theatre to install such equipment.

But it is unlikely that the events transmitted every evening will be of high quality; in all probability they will be subject to the law of averages, just as are the events that are presented by newsreels. There is no way whereby television events may be stored, to be presented as desired and when desired, unless they are recorded on film and reproduced from that record, in which case they will create perhaps no greater interest, and cause no more excitement, than they would if they were projected on the picture screen through film.

*(Continued next week)*

### A GOOD SUGGESTION

In his last release, Abram F. Myers condemns those who are attributing to Mr. Goldwyn's act of engaging the President's son as an attempt to stop the Government's suit, declaring it an injustice, and suggests that the only way by which this injustice may be undone is for every exhibitor to write to Mr. James Roosevelt, in care of United Artists Studios, Hollywood, welcoming him into the industry.

This paper approves of Mr. Myers' suggestion.



**"Little Orphan Annie" with Ann Gillis,  
Robert Kent and June Travis**

(Paramount, Dec. 2; time, 57 min.)

Mediocre program fare. It should be shown on Saturday afternoons, for its only possible appeal will be to children, who have followed the comic strip. The story is stretched to such absurd lengths that adults will not have the patience to sit through its showing. For instance, one of the ridiculous ideas is to have a ten year old girl manage a prizefighter, and another, to have her outwit a gang of racketeers. There is little that the performers can do with the trite material:—

Ann Gillis, an orphan, lives with J. Farrell MacDonald, a former prizefighter manager, now poor. The neighborhood they lived in was a broken-down, poverty-stricken district; most of the families were victims of loan sharks, who treated them shamefully. Ann dreams of the day when her truck-driver friend (Robert Kent), whom she had nicknamed "Robin Hood," would become a famous prizefighter. She induces the families to invest whatever they had in a common fund to help train Kent; in that way they would all share in the profits, pay off the loan sharks, and live decently once more. On the night of the big fight, the loan sharks lock Kent and Ann in a room, but Ann manages to escape. She rounds up all the women of the neighborhood, who arm themselves with rolling pins; they fight off the racketeers and release Kent, who rushes to the fight. He is cheered to victory by all his friends. Kent marries June Travis, the daughter of one of the neighbors. Happiness reigns in the neighborhood, where every one's debts are paid off.

Samuel Ornitz and Endre Bohem wrote the story which was based on the comic strip by Harold Gray; Budd Wilson Schulberg and Samuel Ornitz wrote the screen play. Ben Holmes directed it, and John Speaks produced it. In the cast are J. M. Kerrigan, Sarah Padden, James Burke, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Gang Bullets" with Anne Nagel  
and Robert Kent**

(Monogram, Nov. 23; time, 61 min.)

A fair program gangster melodrama; the action is kept moving at a pretty fast pace. Several situations are somewhat exciting; this is so particularly towards the end, when the gangster leader and his murderous henchmen are trapped. One feels sympathy for the heroine, whose father, the District Attorney, becomes involved with the racketeers; although it is not divulged until the end that the District Attorney had purposely done so in order to get the information he needed to convict the gangster leader, his innocence is obvious, and so one follows his actions with interest. The love interest is mildly pleasant.

In the development of the plot, the efforts of the District Attorney (Charles Trowbridge) and of his assistant (Robert Kent) to obtain evidence with which to indict Morgan Wallace, well-known gangster-racketeer, were of no avail. A series of letters signed "Junius" appear in a newspaper, accusing Trowbridge of working with Wallace. As a matter of fact, Trowbridge accepts a bribe from Wallace, which is exposed in another "Junius" letter. This makes Miss Nagel, his daughter, unhappy; she returns the bribe money to Wallace and pleads with him to leave her father alone. Kent, in line with his duty, brings Trowbridge and Wallace to trial; they are convicted. But Trowbridge discovers that Wallace had arranged for their escape and slips a note to Kent, signed "Junius." Kent then realizes that Trowbridge himself had been sending the letters to the newspaper and had joined the gangsters just as a means of getting evidence against them. The gang is rounded up and Wallace captured. Kent and Miss Nagel plan to marry.

John T. Neville wrote the original screen play; Lambert Hillyer directed it, and E. B. Derr produced it. In the cast are J. Farrell MacDonald, John T. Murray, Arthur Loft, John Merton, and others.

Not for children. Class B.

**"Ride A Crooked Mile" with Akim Tamiroff,  
Leif Erikson and Frances Farmer**

(Paramount, Dec. 9; time, 77 min.)

A good melodrama; the story, insofar as it deals with the relationship between father and son, is interesting; and the performances are good. Although a little draggy in the beginning, it picks up speed in the second half, ending in a manner to excite the feelings and stir the emotions. The weakest part is the development of the romance, which is unbelievable and of little importance. As a box-office attraction, it is doubtful if this will do more than average business, for the names are not strong enough to draw the crowds:—

Akim Tamiroff, a former Cossack, now living in the United States, is a ruthless, enormously wealthy, cattle rustler. He is overjoyed to become reunited with his twenty-one year old son (Leif Erikson), who, up to that time, had lived with Tamiroff's divorced wife. Just when Tamiroff was planning to give up his illegal business to travel with his son, the federal agents arrest him; he is tried and sentenced to prison. Jail is unbearable to Tamiroff, whose barbaric Cossack blood demanded freedom. He keeps boasting to his cell-mate (Lynne Overman) about his son's affection for him and assures him that he would engineer his escape. Tamiroff learns that Erikson had joined the United States Army in order to be stationed close to the prison so as to engineer the escape of his father and Overman. But a change comes over Erikson—although he still loved his father, he had suddenly realized what it meant to betray the uniform and his country. He meets Tamiroff and Overman at the appointed place and orders them back to the prison. Tamiroff is forced to kill Overman in order to protect his son's life. Realizing that he could not go back to prison, but at the same time not wanting to harm his son's career as a soldier, he jumps to his death, happy in the knowledge that his son had a fine character. Frances Farmer, a Russian protégée of Tamiroff's, consoles Erikson, with whom she was in love.

Ferdinand Reyher and John C. Moffitt wrote the story and screen play; Alfred E. Green directed it, and Jeff Lazarus produced it. In the cast are Vladimir Sokoloff, J. M. Kerrigan, John Miljan, and others.

The murders make it unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"Dramatic School" with Luise Rainer,  
Paulette Goddard and Alan Marshal**

(MGM, December 9; time, 89 min.)

This has been given an excellent production; and the direction and acting, particularly by Luise Rainer, are very good. But it is limited in its appeal for, unlike "Stage Door," which it resembles in certain respects, it lacks comedy and human appeal; instead, it goes in for the more serious side of theatrical training, at times becoming somewhat tiresome. The romantic involvements are amusing; but even this part of the picture may not appeal to the masses because of the disappointing way in which it ends:—

Miss Rainer, who worked in a gas meter factory at night in order to pay her way at dramatic school, where she studied during the day, is ashamed to let her fellow students know that she worked at night; instead, she makes up a story that she went out each night with her fiancé, a Marquis (Alan Marshal), who wanted to marry her. Paulette Goddard, another student, learns that the Marquis did not even know Miss Rainer. She arranges a party at which he and Miss Rainer were to appear; but when Marshal sees Miss Rainer, he feels sorry for her and pretends that the affair actually existed. Learning of her poverty, he insists that she give up the factory work in order to devote all her time to her career. He gives her an apartment and beautiful clothes. She falls very much in love with him, but he soon tires of her and breaks the affair. She is heartbroken; furthermore, she is beset with worries about her career, which was jeopardized by the petty jealousy of one of the teachers, a woman (Gale Sondergaard) who, at one time, had been famous; she resented Miss Rainer's youth and talents. But Miss Sondergaard, realizing how unjust she had been, gives Miss Rainer the leading part in the school production. She is so good, on the opening night, that she receives an ovation. Marshal calls to see her after the performance and asks to take her to supper; but she refuses, telling him that the theatre was now the most important thing in her life.

Hans Szekeley and Zoltan Egyed wrote the story, and Ernest Vajda and Mary McCall, Jr., the screen play; Robert B. Sinclair directed it, and Mervyn LeRoy produced it. In the cast are Lana Turner, Genevieve Tobin, Anthony Allan, Henry Stephenson, Melville Cooper, Erik Rhodes, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"Thanks for Everything" with Jack Haley,  
Adolphe Menjou, Jack Oakie  
and Arleen Whelan**

(20th Century-Fox, Dec. 23; time, 72½ min.)

A very good comedy for the masses. It is fast-moving, has good musical interpolations, and offers novelty in comedy situations. The reason for its mass appeal is that the story revolves around an average man, whose plight will be understood by the rank and file; they will feel sympathy for him throughout and will cheer his victory in the end. The closing scenes, in which the members of Haley's firm play tricks on him in order to get his reaction to war, should provoke uproarious laughter. Particularly comical are the consequences of this trick, when Haley's protective instincts are aroused. The romance is pleasant:—

Haley, a small-town grocery clerk, is overjoyed when he wins a \$25,000 prize in an average-man radio contest. Cheered by his neighbors, and particularly by his sweetheart (Arleen Whelan), he leaves for New York to collect the prize money. But Adolphe Menjou, head of the advertising agency, has other ideas; he wants to keep Haley in New York in order to use him as a sort of "guinea pig"; he felt that by watching Haley's reactions he could make predictions as to what the average person would want to wear, to eat, and to use. Helped by his two assistants (Jack Oakie and Binnie Barnes), he leads Haley to believe that he had been disqualified because one of his cousins worked for the firm, and the rules forbade relatives of members of the advertising firm from competing. Ashamed to return home, Haley agrees to work in the office, unaware that he was being used. Everything works out well, until Menjou receives a request from a foreign government to obtain the average American's reaction to war. Haley, love-sick, is unable to give them the answer they wanted. While Haley is confined to bed with a bad case of poison ivy, Menjou sends him newspapers showing that America was ready to go to war; but Haley shows no interest in the news. By means of sound instruments, however, they lead him to believe that the city had been bombed by the enemy, and that women and children had been hurt. The trick works; Haley gets dressed and rushes out to enlist. The enlistment officer naturally thinks Haley is insane and has him taken to the hospital, which Haley believes is a part of the army enlistment rules. Finally the whole thing is explained and he is furious. But his temper is appeased when Menjou gives him the \$25,000 prize money and \$100,000 in addition for his help to the firm. Haley returns to his home town a hero, and marries Miss Whelan.

Gilbert Wright wrote the story, and Curtis Kenyon and Art Arthur, the screen play; William A. Seiter directed it, and Harry Joe Brown produced it. In the cast are Tony Martin, George Barbier, Warren Hymer, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Out West with the Hardys" with  
Mickey Rooney, Lewis Stone  
and Cecilia Parker**

(MGM, November 25; time, 83 min.)

This new picture in the "Hardy" series is a worthy successor to "Love Finds Andy Hardy," and should duplicate its box-office success. It has human appeal, comedy, and likeable characters; but most important, it retains that "homey" quality that has been such an important part of the other pictures in this series. Mickey Rooney is, as usual, delightful as the exuberant young son who has extreme confidence in his abilities. The fun starts when he meets his match in young Virginia Weidler, who puts him in his place and proves to him that he was not as capable as he imagined himself to be. The scenes in which these two youngsters appear together are extremely amusing. The melodramatic twist holds the spectator in fair suspense:—

When Lewis Stone receives a letter from old friends, who owned a ranch out West, asking his help in a matter of importance, he decides to go there with his family. He finds that his friends were in danger of losing their ranch to a neighbor who held title to the water rights and was refusing to renew their lease because he wanted them to sell their ranch to him. In the meantime, Mickey's ego is gradually deflated by little Virginia, who could ride and shoot much better than could he. Determined to show Virginia that he could ride her wild horse, he ties up the horse in an effort to ride and train him. But the plan works out disastrously, for the horse falls and breaks a leg. Virginia's grief at the idea of having her horse shot so touches Mickey that he becomes a changed person. He obtains the services of a veterinarian, who saves the horse's life; but in doing so he almost loses his life—he is lost in the desert. Quick think-

ing by Virginia, who goes out in search of him, saves him. Mickey's sister (Cecilia Parker), who had imagined herself in love with Virginia's father (Gordon Jones), the ranch foreman, changes her mind. Stone and his family return home, unhappy that they could do nothing for their friends. But he suddenly thinks of a plan, and telephones the good news to his friends, who are overjoyed. Mickey and his girl friend (Ann Rutherford), who had quarreled, make up.

Kay Van Riper, Agnes C. Johnston and William Ludwig wrote the screen play; George B. Seitz directed it. In the cast are Fay Holden, Sara Haden, Don Castle, Ralph Morgan, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Orphans of the Street" with Tommy Ryan,  
Robert Livingston and June Storey**

(Republic, Jan. 2; time, 64 min.)

A fair program drama, suitable for the family trade. It has human appeal, which is awakened by the sympathy one feels for young Tommy Ryan, an orphan, whose love for his dog leads him into many adventures. One is held in suspense in the closing scenes, when young Tommy risks his life in order to save his dog. There are other likeable characters: Harry Davenport, as the veterinarian who befriends Tommy, is one; so are Robert Livingston and June Storey, who try to help Tommy when he is in need.

In the development of the plot, Tommy is unhappy when he is compelled to leave military school, for his father's estate was completely depleted. He runs away from the officer who had been sent to escort him to an orphanage, because he would not permit him to take his dog. He and the dog land in a small town, where Tommy becomes acquainted with Livingston, a newspaper reporter covering a dog show. When the dog shows animosity towards Victor Kilian, whose car had struck Tommy, Kilian insists that the dog be taken away from Tommy. But the kindly intervention of Davenport saves the dog. However, when Kilian is found murdered, suspicion centers on the dog because of the type of injuries. The dog is taken away; but Livingston insists that it be given a trial. The judge sentences the dog to be killed. Tommy sneaks the dog away, and sets out to get the real murderer, whom he had suspected. He obtains the evidence he needed and apprehends the real criminal. He and his dog are rewarded; with the money he obtains he is enabled to go back to military school. Davenport keeps a watchful eye over him.

Earl Felton wrote the story, and Eric Taylor, Jack Townley, and Olive Cooper, the screen play; John H. Auer directed it, and Herman Schlom produced it. In the cast are Ralph Morgan, James Burke, and Sidney Blackmer.

Suitability, Class A.

**"The Last Warning" with Preston Foster,  
Frank Jenks and Frances Robinson**

(Universal, Jan. 6; time, 63 min.)

A moderately entertaining murder mystery melodrama, with comedy. The story is muddled and unbelievable, and the over-abundance of dialogue slows up the action. Not until the closing scenes does the action become a little more exciting. The only reason why one's attention is held at all is owed to the fact that the murderer's identity is not divulged until the end. The romance is of slight importance:—

Preston Foster, a private detective, and Frank Jenks, his assistant, arrive at the home of wealthy Raymond Parker in order to guard him; he had been receiving notes warning him that he would be killed unless he turned over a large sum of money as designated. Foster learns that Parker owed Richard Lane, casino owner, \$50,000 on a gambling debt. Believing that Lane had something to do with the notes, he goes to his casino to see him. On that very night Lane is killed. Parker's sister (Frances Robinson) is kidnapped; her fiancé (Robert Page) is frantic. Foster begins to suspect E. E. Clive, uncle to Miss Robinson and Parker, and trustee of their estate, of having a hand in the proceedings. Kay Linaker, a mysterious guest at Parker's home is murdered. Foster finally solves the case. He proves that Parker himself was guilty; that he had murdered Lane, and that he and his sister had framed the kidnapping in order to get money from Clive. Parker had then killed Miss Linaker because she knew too much. Miss Robinson is horrified when she learns that her brother was a murderer. She is consoled by Page.

Jonathan Latimer wrote the story, and Edmund L. Hartmann, the screen play; Al Rogell directed it, and Irving Starr produced it. In the cast are Joyce Compton, and others.

Unsuitable for children. Class B.



## KANN'S UNWITTING EFFORTS TO DISRUPT THE NEGOTIATIONS

In the December 3 issue of *Boxoffice*, under the heading, "Technical Victory Can Be Hollow," Red Kann printed an open letter to Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States, criticizing him for having condemned the trade press on the ground that, following the Chicago meeting, they distorted the statement that had been issued by Col. A. H. Cole, chairman of the Allied negotiating committee, and tried to make it appear as if there were a division in the Allied ranks.

In that letter, Mr. Kann tries to justify whatever he wrote in *Boxoffice* relative to the negotiations. As a matter of fact, he says that that letter should not be taken as an apology.

"In Chicago," says part of Red's letter to Myers, "Harry Cole issued a statement. So did Bill Rodgers. Your associates left that city with a typewritten memorandum of the points discussed. Those points were pretty thoroughly aired as you, some others and we well know. No final agreement was submitted to writing because it was necessary for your board to approve, a slight detail not confined exclusively to Allied by the way. Your bulletin a couple of days later denied any such agreement had been reached. Rodgers had declared there was one, but orally and in principle.

"Now we ask in all reasonableness if you sincerely think that Rodgers, the man you and Nate Yamins had so generously praised at your Pittsburgh convention, would have issued such a statement if he were in any doubt. Or whether you sincerely believe he would have made a complete fool of himself by so reporting to Sidney R. Kent and others in New York unless concrete had been poured into the foundation.

"You may have not thought so if judgment is to rest on your statement. But that seems quite remote. Sidney Samuelson, Herman Blum and Cole, your staunch supporters, may not have thought so. That's equally as remote. But Yamins, Ray Branch, Al Steffes and Max Cohen thought otherwise. Interesting, isn't it? We happen to know how they feel and it doesn't augur too well for Allied.

"Thus, your bulletin made your real motives suspect. Unpleasant word. Sorry, it's the best fit we can find. . . ."

In another part, the letter says:

"You definitely rest on a legalistic interpretation when you maintain no agreement was reached. Technically, you are quite right, provided it is a written and signed document to which you refer and we take it you do. What we are about to urge upon you is the greater common sense in relegating such technicalities to the background for the success of the job at hand.

"There is much at stake and much in sight. You are a significant factor in the situation. As such, you ought to be broad-minded in your approach and in the negotiations leading out of that approach. . . ."

For lack of space, HARRISON'S REPORTS cannot print the entire letter, but what it has printed are the essential points Mr. Kann wants to bring out.

From what has been reproduced here, however, you cannot help coming to the conclusion that I have come to—that Mr. Kann is using casuistry to justify an unjustifiable misinterpretation of the Allied committee's statement in Chicago and of the intents and purposes of the same committee.

The Chicago statement, as printed in last week's HARRISON'S REPORTS, is clear—no misinterpretation of it can be made by any one who does not want to read meanings that are not contained in it. The statement said partly: "All subjects brought forward by both sides have been fully discussed. The Allied committee has received from the distributors' committee the maximum concessions which the distributors feel that they can yield. . . ."

"There being no occasion for further oral discussion at this time, meetings were suspended to enable the drafting committee to reduce to writing all matters discussed. . . ."

"When and if a satisfactory document has been evolved, it will, following a resolution of the Allied board of directors, be reported back to the board for final action."

You see that nowhere does the statement say that there has been an agreement, or understanding. On the contrary, it says that when a satisfactory document is evolved it will be reported to the Allied full board for final action. And yet Mr. Kann, in the November 12 issue of *Boxoffice*, states: "Allied's program, orally agreed upon in principle with the distributors' negotiators in Chicago late last week, . . ." and "Out of Chicago and last week's conferences of the Allied and distributor negotiators comes the word that

all is in accord." And now he, having been called to account by Myers for having given the Chicago document the wrong interpretation, tries to slide out of it by telling Mr. Myers that he is giving that document a legalistic interpretation, and that he, in so doing, lays his real motives open to suspicion. Red divides the Allied leaders into two factions, on the one side placing Col. Cole, Blum and Samuelson, and on the other, Yamins, Branch, Max Cohen and Al Steffes.

But Steffes, after reading Red's open letter to Myers, gave Red a piece of his mind by a letter dated December 5. Al takes exception to the part of the open letter in which Red asserts that he knows how he, Al, felt. "I don't know about the others, Red," Al says, "but if you can tell me what my feelings are in the entire matter you are a better man than I am. . . . I went into these conferences with an open mind and it still is open. By what right can you definitely state that you know how I feel about the statements issued by various people? . . . I don't mind telling you at this time that I feel quite satisfied that if there is a deal made it will have the entire and whole-hearted support of Allied men and on the other hand if there should come a time when Allied breaks negotiations you will also find that Allied will be 100% in accord.

"Allied, under its present setup, is 10 years old and I will venture to say that they have had as many arguments within the confines of their own Board of Directors as is consistent with good business, but after the brush was all cleared away and everybody had an opportunity to voice their opinion, you have always found Allied 100% in accord on any movement and I am sure you are going to continue to find them that way. . . ."

"Why is it, Red, that other lines of business can hold conferences without being bothered by reporters? Why is it so necessary, in this industry, that every time a man takes a trip over thirty blocks at least three trade paper reporters have to ask him what the purpose of the trip was, whom he saw and what he did?

"Why don't you try, just once, to leave the conferences alone on a matter as important as they have been conferring on? . . ."

In sending a copy of Steffes' letter to Messrs. Cole, Yamins, Samuelson, Branch, and to other Allied leaders, Mr. Myers said in a memorandum partly as follows:

"I still think that members of the Committee who understood the position taken should write to Red and point out that our Committee stipulated there should be no reference in the publicity to an agreement, even an 'agreement in principle,' because the details of arbitration had not been agreed to and we did not want to be exposed to the danger of having to disagree later over a detail when that detail might be the most important factor in the setup.

"A bold attempt is being made to make it appear that there is a rift in the Allied ranks, at a very crucial time, when no such rift in fact exists. . . ."

It seems as if Red Kann has made a mistake and, instead of coming right out and saying so, he tries to cover himself up by all kinds of editorial interpretations. Col. Cole's Chicago statement is, as said, plain; nowhere does it contain the word "understanding," or "agreement." Red must have picked these words out of the air, and now, to justify himself, he says that a "technical victory can be hollow"!

If Red Kann is interested in the success of the negotiations, he should stop trying to throw a monkey wrench into the machinery, for a successful outcome of these negotiations will benefit every one connected with the motion picture industry, trade papers included.

Forget the matter, Red! Wait until after the negotiations take a definite turn one way or the other before you find fault! You will have much to write then!

## ASSIST IN THE MAKING OF A STAR

Martin Spellman, who is about 11, does so good a piece of work in "I Am a Criminal," the picture which Mr. E. B. Derr has just produced for Monogram, that he surely ought to be a drawing card in his next picture.

The late Louis J. Selznick often said, and rightly so, that he could make a star out of any good actor by putting him in one good picture. "I Am a Criminal" ought to do that for Master Spellman, for, by virtue of a good story, capable direction, and intelligent dialogue, the youngster is given a real opportunity to display his talents.

Those of you who have not bought Monogram pictures this season ought to buy this picture; by so doing you will do your bit in the establishing of a new star personality.

HARRISON'S REPORTS offers to its readers and subscribers the greetings of the season.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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### The Television Problem in Motion Picture Theatres—No. 3

Q. 6: It has been suggested by some persons, no doubt with optimism rather than assurance, that, once theatres are equipped with television apparatuses, there is no reason why feature films can not be presented, by the television method, on the screens of them all at the same time, through a central studio. Will this be possible?

A. A plan of this kind seems very doubtful, because in such an event all theatres would have to show the same program, even if they should happen to be in the same neighborhood. And no exhibitor will be willing to show the program that is shown by his competitor, at least not on the same days. A second station to serve competitive theatres with a different program may be out of the question, because of the costs of the transmitting station and of the pickup crews involved. Transmitting stations of high power with elaborate studio equipment may cost anywhere from \$500,000 to \$750,000, and even small stations may run over \$100,000. And hundreds of thousands of dollars would have to be added for the annual salary cost for the pickup and station crews.

Even if these costs could be offset from the receipts, there would be no advantage in presenting a film feature by means of television instead of directly from the film itself, and there would be a great disadvantage, because the definition of a television picture can not be as good as that of the motion picture, not at least for a long time.

Still another disadvantage will be the fact that television cannot at present transmit pictures in natural color. It is true that the proportion of moving pictures in natural colors today is small; yet an exhibitor cannot afford to forego the showing of the occasional good natural-color picture, as he will be compelled to do if he were to make the presentation of his moving pictures entirely by television.

Q. 7: What will be the cost of the television service to the theatres?

A. This is, indeed, an extremely difficult question to answer, because the equipment for theatre television is still in the experimental stage. A transmitting station that could serve all the theatres of its own circuit in a given large city would cost probably several hundred thousand dollars, and anywhere from two to ten times that amount a year for the pickup of its news events.

What the theatre television equipment will cost will depend entirely on size of picture and the quantity in which the factories can put these equipments out. Such a television outfit for a theatre might cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$50,000. It is certain to run into thousands of dollars, for a high quality television receiver, the powerful tubes, the high grade amplifiers, and the delicate optical systems

required for making the screen large, are costly pieces of mechanism.

As far as the reproduction of sound is concerned, little extra cost need be figured, for the sound equipment that is now serving motion pictures will serve also television pictures.

Television methods are highly complicated. Television pictures are produced by placing, each in an exact position on the screen, and during each second, more than ten millions of tiny dots of light as well as of shadow. If these dots should be of the wrong brightness, or of insufficient "darkness," or if they should be displaced even slightly, picture quality is lost. It is natural, then, that the equipment be precise and elaborate in construction, and therefore costly.

Operating and servicing will present to the exhibitor new problems. The salaries of the television projectionists cannot be determined at present. There are today practically no such projectionists in existence; at least not as professionals. These salaries may be bigger than those of the moving picture projectionists. At any rate, they will not be smaller. The maintenance and servicing of the equipment would probably cost several times more than that of the film equipment. For all these reasons each theatre owner will have to consider seriously whether he can add to his box office receipts enough to justify the investment of thousands of additional dollars.

The exhibitor will have at least two other bills to foot: the bill for the license from the equipment manufacturer, for the right to use the equipment, and the bill to the service station.

As for the cost of the license, this may be included in the purchase price of the equipment; but as far as the service cost is concerned, no one yet knows what it will be, not even those who are now engaged in the development of television; it may run up from tens to hundreds, (or even conceivably thousands), of dollars every week. The rapid and reliable pickup of television events, the relaying of them to the transmitting station, the retransmitting of them to the theatres either by radio or by coaxial cables, is an expensive operation. Whether such a service would bring in enough added receipts to justify contracting for it is something no one as yet knows.

*(Continued next week)*

### ALLIED'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

On January 15 next, Allied will be ten years old, and its leaders intend to celebrate the event. but because that date falls on Sunday, the celebration will be held on the 17th and the 18th, the days

*(Continued on last page)*



**"A Christmas Carol" with Reginald Owen**

(MGM, December 16; time, 69 min.)

Delightful entertainment; it should, not only appeal to those who have read the Dickens' story from which it was adapted, but also touch the hearts of all those who have a spark of kindness in them. In 1935 Paramount released the English picture, "Scrooge," which was based on the same story; this version is almost similar in treatment. Although it is particularly suitable for the holiday season, it is the type of picture that may be enjoyed at any time, for it carries a message of good will that should appeal to the masses.

The story deals with Scrooge (Reginald Owen), the skinflint, whose only amusement in life was to work hard and hoard his money. He treats his clerk (Gene Lockhart) heartlessly and pays him miserly wages. He even refuses to offer Christmas greetings to his neighbors. On Christmas eve, he receives a visit from the ghost of his former partner, who begs him to change his ways of living; otherwise, like him, he would not find peace after death, because of the way he had conducted himself during his life. Three spirits take Scrooge to various homes where, unseen, he observes what others were doing and saying. The scenes of love and happiness make him realize how wasted was his life. He awakens Christmas morning a changed man. He rushes to his clerk's home, informs him he would receive an increase in salary, and delights the family with gifts and a turkey. He contributes to charity, and decides to make his nephew (Barry Mackay) a partner in his firm, thus enabling him to marry the girl he loved (Lynn Carver).

Hugo Butler wrote the screen play, Edwin L. Marin directed it, and Joseph Mankiewicz produced it. In the cast are Terry Kilburn (as Tiny Tim), Kathleen Lockhart, Leo G. Carroll, Ann Rutherford, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"There's That Woman Again" with Melvyn Douglas and Virginia Bruce**

(Columbia, December 24; time, 73 min.)

A very good comedy-murder melodrama; it is a follow-up to "There's Always a Woman," except that Virginia Bruce appears in place of Joan Blondell. The story is in the same vein, with many comedy angles to relieve the tension. Again the actions of the scatter-brained wife provoke hearty laughter. One of the most comical situations is that which takes place at a beauty parlor where Miss Bruce, unable to speak because of a mud pack on her face, whistles her instructions through a glass tube. The comedy in no way detracts from the interest one might have in the melodramatic angle, for the story is mystifying enough to hold one in tense suspense:—

Melvyn Douglas, a private detective, is hampered in his work of tracking down a gang of jewel thieves because of interference by his scatter-brained wife (Miss Bruce). He takes Margaret Lindsay, part owner of the jewelry store where the robberies had been occurring, to luncheon; but Miss Bruce, being jealous, insists on joining the luncheon party, almost spoiling everything. In her own silly way, Miss Bruce discovers important clues. Finding it necessary to leave a dinner party to follow another clue, she pretends that she had to go home because of her "condition"; Douglas, thinking that she meant she was going to have a baby, is naturally overjoyed. A clerk (Gordon Oliver) from the jewelry store is arrested. After his arrest, however, another robbery occurs, but this time it is accompanied by a murder—that of Miss Lindsay's partner (Jonathan Hale). It develops that Miss Lindsay herself was the guilty person; that she had been stealing the jewels and had disposed of them through Stanley Ridges, a crook. She had not meant to kill Hale, but he had walked into the trap she had set for Ridges, who had been trying to blackmail her. Later she kills Ridges. Her intention had been to build up a fortune for herself, leave her husband, and then run away with Oliver. Douglas arrives at Miss Lindsay's apartment in time to save his wife, whom Miss Lindsay, knowing that she had guessed the truth, was planning to kill. Miss Lindsay is captured, the jewels recovered, and the case closed. Douglas is disappointed when he learns that his wife had pretended she was going to have a baby.

Gladys Lehman wrote the story, and Philip G. Epstein, James E. Grant and Ken Englund, the screen play; Alexander Hall directed it, and B. B. Kahane produced it. In the cast are Tom Dugan, Don Beddoe, Pierre Watkin, and others.

The murders make it unsuitable for children. Class B.

**"The Strange Case of Dr. Mead" with Jack Holt and Beverly Roberts**

(Columbia, December 15; time, 67 min.)

A fair program drama, centering around the efforts of a doctor to overcome the superstition and bigotry of mountain folk. The story is developed in a logical way; it has comedy, provoked by the antics of the rustic characters, some excitement, when the crowd becomes unruly, and a mildly pleasant romance. It is not, however, particularly cheerful entertainment, for the action deals, in the main, with sickness and ailing persons:—

Jack Holt, a famous New York surgeon, arrives at a small mountain community for a vacation. While out hunting, he accidentally shoots a young boy; he tries to take care of the boy but meets with opposition. Appalled by the lack of medical conveniences in the community and by the incompetency of the village doctor, who knew practically nothing about medicine, Holt goes to the state authorities and requests them to put him in charge. He incurs the enmity of the villagers, with the exception of Beverly Roberts, who had studied nursing, when he operates on the young man, even though he saves his life. And when he vaccinates the children against typhoid, the villagers want to run him out of town. But he finally overcomes their prejudices and ignorance, during a typhoid epidemic, when he shows that all those children who had been vaccinated were immune to the disease. He establishes a clinic under the care of a legitimate doctor, and then returns to New York, taking with him young Noah Bery, Jr., who was eager to become a real physician. Miss Roberts, Bery's sweetheart, promises to wait for him.

G. R. and Carlton Sand wrote the story, and Gordon Rigby, the screen play; Lewis D. Collins directed it, and Larry Darmour produced it. In the cast are Paul Everton, John Qualen, Charles Middleton, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Heart of the North" with Dick Foran, Patric Knowles, Gale Page and Gloria Dickson**

(First National, December 10; time, 82 min.)

A good outdoor action melodrama, photographed in natural colors. If it weren't for the fact that it was photographed in technicolor, however, it would be just another Canadian Royal Mounted Police melodrama, for the plot is not novel. It should, nevertheless, please followers of outdoor melodramas, for there are exciting fist fights, and thrilling encounters between the gangsters and the officers. The excitement during these scenes is intensified by the colorful background. At times, the color is unflattering to the performers; but it is effective in the outdoor scenes:—

When Patric Knowles, Sergeant of the Mounted Police, is murdered during a river steamer holdup, his pal (Dick Foran) swears to get the criminals. He comforts Knowles' orphan child (Janet Chapman), leaving her in the care of his fiancée (Gale Page). But Janet hides in the motor launch in which the officers were to start out in their search, for she wanted to go along with Foran, whom she adored. When Foran finds her, he naturally is compelled to stop; he leaves her with Gloria Dickson, daughter of a trapper. While there, Foran and his men find in Miss Dickson's father's storehouse some of the furs that had been stolen from the steamer. Miss Dickson promises to hold her father until Foran returns. But one of the men, wanting to get credit for himself, arrests the trapper; Miss Page, a little jealous of Miss Dickson, identifies the trapper as one of the river boat gunmen, even though she knew it was untrue. In the meantime, Foran, handicapped by the necessity of dividing his squad in accordance with instructions from the commanding officer, finds the hiding place of the crooks. He and his two assistants are wounded and are forced to return to headquarters. Foran is put under arrest for not having arrested the trapper. Realizing it would mean death for the trapper unless he caught the criminals, Foran escapes and, in company with Allen Jenkins, goes in search of the guilty men; he finally captures them, bringing them to headquarters just in time to save the trapper from the mob that was bent on lynching him. Realizing how cruel she had been, Miss Page goes away, leaving Foran free to marry Miss Dickson. Foran becomes commanding officer.

William B. Mowery wrote the story, and Lee Katz and Vincent Sherman, the screen play; Lewis Seiler directed it, and Bryan Foy produced it. In the cast are Joseph Sawyer, James Stephenson, Anthony Averill, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



**"The Beachcomber" with Charles Laughton**

(Paramount, Rel. date not set; time, 90 min.)

In spite of the fact that Charles Laughton does good acting, and that the picture has been founded on the story by W. Somerset Maugham, the famous author, it is not a good entertainment. Mr. Laughton is presented as a drunkard, and the important woman character, Miss Elsa Lanchester, who takes the part of sister to a missionary, assisting him in his work, is a narrow-minded person, who tries to reform everybody. The mob characters are natives of Malay, where the picture unfolds, and the background is mostly sordid. Some of the scenes are not very edifying, not at least for young folk, for the hero's acts indicate that he was having illicit relations with native women. The picture was produced in England; the photography is nothing to brag about:—

Because of a brawl with natives and the native police, Laughton, a beachcomber in a tiny Malayan island, spending his money on drinking and carousing with women, is sentenced by the Dutch commander of the island to a three-month banishment on a neighboring island. But the commander soon misses the hero, and, when Miss Lanchester and Tyrone Guthrie, her brother, set out to visit the island where the hero had been banished for the purpose of preaching to the natives, he orders their native escort to bring Laughton back. The launch breaks down and Miss Lanchester is horrified to think that she would have to spend the night near Laughton, a man with so terrible a reputation; but when she sees that the hero had treated her with unconcern and as a gentleman she changes her opinion of him. An epidemic breaks out among the natives in another island and the two missionaries decide to go to inoculate them. The hero accompanies them. It is then that Miss Lanchester begins to recognize noble instincts in Laughton. They marry, return to England, open a bar room, and live happily ever after.

The plot has been based on the novel, "Vessel of Wrath," by W. Somerset Maugham. Bartlett Cormack wrote the screen play. It was produced and directed by Erich Pommer. In the cast are Robert Newton, Dolly Mollinger, Rosita Garcia, and others.

Not for children, nor for young women. Not for Sunday showing. Class B.

**"Cipher Bureau" with Leon Ames and Charlotte Wynters**

(Grand National, November 4; time, 69½ min.)

A fair program espionage melodrama. The story deals with the work done by the U. S. Army Cipher Bureau in decoding messages sent out by spies. The methods employed by the members of the bureau in this work is interesting. Although parts of the story are somewhat far-fetched, they are made to seem credible because of the good acting by a capable cast. As a matter of fact, the performances are superior to the material. There are two romances, one of which is an important part of the story:—

Leon Ames, head of the Cipher Bureau, is on the trail of a powerful spy ring. Each time that he closes in on the spies, however, they manage to escape. Ames sends his brother (Don Dillaway), a naval officer, to New York, there to try, with the means of a new radio machine, to pick up the whereabouts of the radio broadcasting station used by the spies. Joan Woodbury, member of the spy ring, following instructions from her superior, becomes acquainted with Dillaway. The spies, by means of the information she obtains from him, through drugging him and making it appear as if he were intoxicated, are successful in stealing important plans in his trust. He is naturally disgraced and dishonorably discharged from the Navy, but Miss Woodbury, who had fallen in love with Dillaway, redeems herself when she passes on to Ames important information, which enables him to break up the spy ring and to capture the leaders. Dillaway and Miss Woodbury are reconciled. And Ames decides to take time off to marry his faithful secretary (Charlotte Wynters).

Monroe Shaff wrote the story, and Arthur Hoerl, the screen play; Charles Lamont directed and produced it. In the cast are Tenny Holtz, G. Von Seyffertitz, Walter Bohn, Jason Robard, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

**"Swing Sister Swing" with Ken Murray, Johnny Downs and Ernest Truex**

(Universal, December 16; time, 67 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining program comedy-drama, with music. It's the old story of the young man who permits success to go to his head, only to learn his lesson in the end. As entertainment, its appeal will be directed mainly to devotees of swing music. The beginning is fairly amusing, particularly when some of the older characters use the slang terms employed by "jitterbugs"; and the introduction of the swing dance is entertaining. But the dance is repeated so often, without any variation, that it eventually becomes tiresome to watch it. There is nothing that the characters do to awaken the spectator's sympathy; for that reason the story lacks human appeal. Occasional wisecracks by Ken Murray provoke laughter:—

Murray, a former vaudeville actor, arrives at his small home-town to visit his mother. Attracted by the swing dancing of Johnny Downs and Kathryn Kane, and by the trombone playing of Eddie Quillan, Murray convinces them that they belonged in New York. He goes to New York to see Ernest Truex, a dancing instructor, and induces him to advance the money to bring the three entertainers to New York. Downs and Miss Kane introduce their dance at a fashionable night club, where Quillan plays the trombone. It catches the public's fancy; Truex's school is filled with pupils who want to learn the dance. Murray arranges a tour for Downs, Miss Kane, and Quillan. Miss Kane, realizing that the public would soon tire of the dance, saves their earnings. As she had expected, the bookings suddenly stop, and following Murray's advice, she and Quillan decide to go back home; but Downs, thinking that he had talent, insists on remaining in New York. He finally realizes that he was an amateur and returns home, where, to his joy, he finds that Miss Kane had bought with his earnings a gasoline station for him. He and Miss Kane decide to marry.

Burt Kelly wrote the story, and Charles Grayson, the screen play; Joseph Santley directed it, and Burt Kelly produced it. In the cast are Edna Sedgwick, Nana Bryant, Ted Weems and his orchestra, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933, OF HARRISON'S REPORTS, published Weekly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1938.

State of New York.

County of New York.

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Sylvia Miller, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the business manager of the HARRISON'S REPORTS and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager, are:  
Publisher, *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.  
Editor, *P. S. Harrison*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.  
Managing Editor, *None*.  
Business Manager, *Sylvia Miller*.

2. That the owner is: *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

*P. S. Harrison*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent, or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: *None*.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the name of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustees or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of bona fide owners; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation, has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as stated by him.

(Signed) SYLVIA MILLER,

(Business Manager).

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of September, 1938.

LILLIAN SILVER,

(My commission expires March 30, 1940)



on which the Allied board of directors meets, at the Hotel Carlton, Washington, D. C.

A "Founders' Day" dinner will be given on the evening of the 17th, to honor those who have done so much to bring the organization to its present strength, and HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that every exhibitor who can attend do so by all means.

## THE PRODUCER MEMORANDUM

In a desire to avoid embarrassing both the exhibitor and the distributor negotiating committees, HARRISON'S REPORTS refrained from expressing its views on whether the grants the distributors have made, as contained in the memorandum that they have sent to the exhibitor bodies, may or may not prove satisfactory to the independent theatre owners. But in view of the fact that Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest, an Allied branch, at a general meeting in Minneapolis recently, rejected forthwith the concessions, despite Al Steffes' efforts to induce the organization to accept them, and that the board of directors of Independent Theatre Owners of Southern California & Arizona, an independent exhibitor organization not affiliated with Allied States Association, has, according to Mr. Albert Galston, its president, felt "keen disappointment that the drafts do not, in most instances, comprise" either "the intent" or "the substance of the points presented by the Association's delegates in New York City," reasons for withholding an analysis of the distributor memorandum no longer exist.

At this time I should like to treat on three of the so-called concessions, even though they do not appear in the memorandum in order: Theatre acquisition, score charges, and preferred playing time. I shall use the numbers and subtitles that are given in the distributor memorandum:

"13. Acquiring Theatres: No distributor shall coerce any exhibitor to enter into any contract for the exhibition of motion pictures, by the commission of any overt act evidencing an intention to build or otherwise acquire a motion picture theatre for operation in competition with each exhibitor, but nothing herein shall otherwise in any way abridge the right of a producer or distributor to build or otherwise acquire a motion picture theatre in any location."

In view of the pending suit by the Government, which seeks to compel the producer-distributors, through court action, (and if court action fails, through legislation), to divorce themselves from the ownership, operation or control of motion picture theatres, one fails to comprehend how so-called intelligent persons would dare make to the exhibitors such an offer. The offer means simply this: "I promise not to compel you to buy my pictures by threats of either buying or building a theatre in your neighborhood to compete with you, provided you agree in writing that you can't stop me from either buying or building a theatre, in any location, if I want to—that's my right, and I want you to agree to it."

Have you any idea what would happen if you signed such an agreement? The producers would go to the Department of Justice and say to the Attorney General: "The exhibitors have agreed to recognize our right to buy or build theatres anywhere we want to. Consequently, there is no reason for you to seek to drive us out of the exhibition business." The independent exhibitor representative who would sign such a document would never be able to show his face among those whom he represented. Nor among any other independent exhibitors. He couldn't look any one in the face.

If the concession was in any way fair, I would have called your attention to the fact that Allied, in accordance with my analysis of its memorandum in the November 26 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, insisted that the producers agree not to use the promotion of a new theatre as a selling threat, and would have suggested to your representatives to insist that such a point be conceded, but since the concessions on this matter are no concessions at all, there is no need for my wasting your time with such a suggestion.

Since separation of theatres from production-distribution is one of the points that the exhibitors intend to insist upon, and since the distributors refrain from even discussing it, it is the opinion of HARRISON'S REPORTS that no final understanding can be reached between Allied States and producers. I am sure that the same is true also of some of the unaffiliated independent exhibitor units, such as the Southern California unit.

"7. Score Charges. In respect of license agreements commencing with the season of 1938-39 all score charges, if

any, for pictures licensed on a flat rental basis shall be added to and consolidated with the film rental and commencing with the season 1939-40 there shall be no score charge in respect of pictures licensed on a percentage basis."

In view of the fact that controversies arising out of the method of consolidating score charges with rentals are not made subject to arbitration, it is doubtful if this is a 100% concession; the salesman could make the exhibitor agree on the flat rentals and then add the score charge to them afterwards, and the exhibitor will have no way of getting justice in case his flat-rental offer should be the highest he could make. Let us not forget that what you are seeking is, not consolidation of the score charges with the film rentals, but elimination of them.

"4. Preferred Playing Time. Preferred playing time shall not be designated by the distributor for a feature picture for which the rental is either a fixed sum or computed in whole or in part upon a percentage of the admission receipts with a minimum fixed sum guaranteed. In respect of each feature picture for which the film rental is to be computed wholly upon a percentage of the admission receipts, the number of such pictures to be played on preferred playing time as well as the days constituting preferred playing time shall be determined by mutual agreement between the distributor and the exhibitor at the time of the making of the license agreement and the distributor shall then be free to designate the pictures to be played in accordance with such agreement."

This concession has another paragraph, but the essence of the concession is contained in the aforementioned paragraph.

In view of the fact that the method of leasing pictures on percentage with a minimum guarantee no longer exists, or it exists only in a few isolated cases, and that the distributor has no right to designate pictures sold on a flat-rental basis, the distributors are granting no worth-while concession on the question of "Preferred Playing Time." For your representatives, then, to accept this proposal is merely to fall into a trap: you are asked to sanction preferred playing time on pictures leased on a straight-percentage arrangement, merely on the pretext that something is offered to you.

There are so many other pitfalls that your representatives should not agree on this proposal unless a fairer offer is made.

Reading over the distributor memorandum, particularly the part referring to the three proposals discussed in this article, I wonder whether it is you who are seeking concessions, or whether the distributors are seeking concessions from you, for if you agree to these proposals it will be you who would be granting the concessions. They want your representatives to accept these proposals so that they may nullify the efforts of the United States Government to bring you genuine relief.

## MR. ALBERT GALSTON'S STATEMENT

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, Mr. Galston, president of Independent Theatre Owners of Southern California & Arizona, announced that the board of directors of his organization expressed keen disappointment at the fact that the producer memorandum has ignored many of their just demands, and hoped that they would realize that the exhibitors cannot be satisfied with partial settlement of their problems and that they will reconsider. A letter, he says, was sent to Mr. Rodgers to that effect.

Part of the statement says:

"The exhibitor delegates sent to the New York conference of the unaffiliated exhibitor organizations of the United States gave judicious thought to the preparation of their briefs and each one of our points received the unanimous approval of all our representatives.

"We cannot believe that the Distributors Committee was unanimous in the final adoption of their draft. It is our guess that a number of members of the Distributors Committee endeavored to sway the constructive representatives of the distributors on the committee who demonstrated a sincere desire to end for all times the ancient exhibitor problems. Therefore, it is our firm conviction that it is our duty to continue our negotiations and we believe the subsequent sessions with the distributors will bring about a more complete adoption of the balance of our points."

HARRISON'S REPORTS congratulates Mr. Galston and his board of directors for the position they have taken relative to the producer concessions.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XX

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1938

No. 53

### The Television Problem in Motion Picture Theatres—No. 4

Q. 8: One major film company has announced that it has engaged in television experimenting and may soon manufacture and sell receivers. It is to be assumed that other film companies will in time follow suit. Is it advisable for film companies to engage in work that is foreign to their nature?

A. It is hard to understand why any motion picture producing concern should want to engage in the manufacture and sale of television receivers. The manufacture of radio receivers is a complicated as well as difficult undertaking. There exist in this country many large factories, fully capable of handling the manufacture of both radio and television receivers. These factories have had a long experience, now possess costly machinery, a skilled staff, reliable retail merchandising outlets, and experienced wholesale distribution groups. Not only can they meet the market demand for television sets, but also produce an oversupply, just as has often been the case with the manufacture of radio sets: in some years the supply so exceeded the demand that prices were slashed, causing both manufacturers and retailers serious financial losses.

The manufacture of television receivers is even more difficult and complicated than is the manufacture of radio receivers, and it is surprising that companies that do not possess the slightest knowledge of the manufacture, distribution and retailing of even radio receivers should enter into a field that is so different from their business. According to what seems reliable information, of the radio receiver manufacturers with whom motion picture companies have made deals, none has large facilities for manufacturing receivers, long experience in such manufacture, and either nation-wide distribution facilities, or a national retail outlet system. For all these reasons, the entry of moving picture producers into the television-receiver field seems to be as logical as would be the entry of a radio-set manufacturer into motion-picture production, with great confidence that he would be able to sell his pictures to the theatres at a profit. The motion picture producers would certainly laugh at such a manufacturer; they would know how disastrous would be his undertaking. Isn't the case similar to that of the picture companies' entering the television manufacturing field? Will their hiring of some experts to supervise the television business for them be able to save them from disaster? Can a company run a business with hired men when none of its executives knows the complex structure of that business or has had practical experience in it?

The motion picture industry can profit from television, but by a different method entirely; it could produce pictures suitable for television purposes, at a price, to be sent out from network stations to

home subscribers, and even sold to advertisers who may wish to use them for television programs. The requirements of such pictures would be different from the requirements of pictures shown in theatres: they would be short (perhaps from fifteen to twenty minutes' duration), and minor stars could be used in them. In this way, the motion picture theatres would not be injured. As a matter of fact, these theatres would benefit, for the players in such pictures would gain popularity, eventually being starred in feature motion pictures. Part of the profits the producers would thus make could be devoted to improving the quality of their feature pictures. It would be a fine thing if the producers, by these means, repaid, in a small measure, the debt they owe to the picture theatres.

Q. 9: Is it possible that television will fit better in theatres designed to show exclusively current events transmitted by television?

A. It is possible that ultimately there will be produced some sort of continuous television news program, the nation-wide events transmitted to some central station, to be redistributed to subscribing theatres nationally by either radio or cable network, after being combined into a suitable program, employing events recorded on film as fillers. But such a project may prove too costly, because the gathering and the distribution of such programs nationally would involve connection facilities, whether radio or cable, as well as pickup crews, and an editing headquarters staff, which might prove too expensive to maintain. The cables so far built cost about \$5,000 a mile. But even if the cable cost should be reduced considerably, a cable length of anywhere between 25,000 and 50,000 miles, as would probably be required ultimately, would most surely prove a staggering investment. The pickup crews may have to be much larger than those employed for newsreel purposes, because these crews would have to be stationed in widely separated places, ready to pickup whatever events may be taking place at any given time. The editing force, too, would have to be large so that the assembling of these events and the fitting of them with proper commentary, ready for redistribution, may be done with rapidity.

The opinion is that, although such a project seems interesting, it might prove economically unsound.  
(Continued next week)

### THE PRODUCER MEMORANDUM—No. 2

From among the concessions that the exhibitors have been hoping to receive from the distributors, two stand out: separation of exhibition from production-distribution, and arbitration.

The question of theatre separation was dealt with  
(Continued on last page)



### **"Flirting With Fate" with Joe E. Brown and Beverly Roberts**

(MGM, Dec. 2; time, 68 min.)

Just a fair comedy. It is not as good as this star's last picture, for the gags used are old and not particularly amusing. Brown works hard to put freshness into trite situations, but his efforts fall mostly flat, for the material is poor; in only a few situations does the comedy provoke laughter. There is some excitement towards the end, when Brown, who had been intent on killing himself, suddenly decides he wants to live, but finds his life endangered by a scheming bandit. Incidental music has been worked into the plot, but with only fair results:—

Stranded with his troupe in South America, Brown realizes that their bad luck had been due to his poor management, for he had incurred the animosity of the most powerful theatrical man (Charles Judels) in South America on account of his clumsiness each time he met him. Knowing that the troupe would get good booking if they could return to New York, Brown writes a note to Beverly Roberts, a member of the troupe, assigning his life insurance to them; he then sets out to kill himself. But all his efforts are in vain: the gun he chooses turns out to be empty, the ant poison he drinks turns out to be whiskey, and the lion he battles with becomes tame. Finally he makes a bargain with Leo Carrillo, a bandit, whereby Carrillo, for \$500, would kill him. But first Brown has to go to a party at Carrillo's hacienda, to await his execution at sunrise. Carrillo brings Judels to the party by force to listen to Steffi Duna sing, but she sings so terribly that Judels refuses to listen; so they look him up with Brown. Judels promises Brown that, if he would obtain his release, he would book his troupe for a year. Brown then decides to live. But Stanley Fields, one of the bandits who had been trying to overthrow Carrillo, had other ideas; he wanted to collect the \$500. After a hectic fight, in which Brown and Judels try to escape by hiding in the costume of a bull, the bandits are subdued. Miss Roberts, who loved Brown, is happy to find him alive.

Dan Jarrett and A. Dorian Otvos wrote the story, and Joseph M. March, Ethel LaBlanche, Charlie Melson, and Harry Clork, the screen play; Frank McDonald directed it, with Edward Gross as an associate producer under David Loew, the producer. In the cast are Wynne Gibson, Leonid Kinskey, Chris Martin, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Arrest Bulldog Drummond" with John Howard and Heather Angel**

(Paramount, Nov. 25; time, 56 min.)

Good entertainment. It has fast action, thrilling situations, and a good sprinkling of comedy. In spite of the fact that parts of the story are far-fetched, one is held in tense suspense, for something is happening every moment. The production values are good, and the acting commendable.

This time, Drummond and his pal (Reginald Denny) accidentally stumble upon a murder, which soon involves them in an international plot. The murdered man had invented a powerful death ray, and the villain, (George Zucco), desiring to get the machine so that he might sell it to international agents, had killed the inventor. Because of threats to his fiancée (Heather Angel) from the villain, Drummond is compelled to postpone his wedding. But he, his pal, and his ever-faithful valet (E. E. Clive), determined to uncover the plot and to find the machine, start out on their search. Drummond, learning that the villain and his assistant were sailing on the boat on which his fiancée was a passenger, flies down to the first stopping point, equipped with full authority by Scotland Yard to bring back the villain. Drummond's pal and his valet are caught by the villain; he plans to kill them after killing Drummond, who, as he thought, was walking into a trap he had set. But Miss Angel's quick thinking saves Drummond's life. In company with his two friends, who had escaped, and with police following, Drummond rushes to the villain's hideout. Drummond blows up the machine and helps in rounding up the villain and his co-workers.

H. C. McNeile wrote the story, and Stuart Palmer, the screen play; James Hogan directed it, and Stuart Walker produced it. In the cast are H. B. Warner, Jean Fenwick, Zeffie Tilbury, and others.

Because of the murders, it is hardly suitable for children. Class B.

### **"Sweethearts" with Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy and Frank Morgan**

(MGM, Dec. 30; time, 113 min.)

Very good. The lavish production is enhanced by the technicolor photography. Even though the story is thin, the MacDonald-Eddy fans will probably overlook this, for the stars sing many good numbers in their customary talented way. And there is comedy both in dialogue and situation to brighten up things. The picture has unusual appeal for women, for Miss MacDonald wears beautiful clothes and makes many changes; this is so particularly in one scene, where she is shown buying a new wardrobe in preparation for a trip. The romance is pleasant:—

Miss MacDonald and Mr. Eddy, stars of a Broadway musical show that had been running for six years, are married and happy. They are, however, slaves to their profession for not only do they appear at the theatre each night, but they are compelled to make appearances at benefits, sing over the radio, and make recordings. The members of their respective families live in luxury on the earnings of the stars. Tired of their hectic existence and annoyed at the demands of their manager (Frank Morgan) and of their relatives, they decide to leave Broadway for Hollywood, there to make motion pictures. Morgan is frantic, for it meant losing his best source of revenue. Mischa Auer, a playwright, thinks of a way of handling the situation. He reads the script of his new play to Miss MacDonald in which he includes dialogue similar to the love letters Eddy had been sending to his wife each night; Miss MacDonald is unaware that Auer had stolen the letters from her dressing room. Auer leads her to believe that the notes had been sent to a young lady by a married man whose wife knew nothing of the affair. Miss MacDonald, thinking that the persons involved were her husband and his trusted secretary (Florence Rice), refuses to go to Hollywood; as a matter of fact she leaves her husband. They both go on the road with different companies, and both are miserably unhappy. Eventually the truth comes out and husband and wife are reconciled. They forgive Morgan for his part in the affair and decide to remain on Broadway.

The plot was adapted from the Victor Herbert stage play; Dorothy Parker and Alan Campbell wrote the screen play, W. S. VanDyke directed it, and Hunt Stromberg produced it. In the cast are Ray Bolger, Reginald Gardiner, Herman Bing, Raymond Walburn, Gene Lockhart, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### **"Adventure in Sahara" with Paul Kelly**

(Columbia, Nov. 15; time, 57 min.)

A trite program melodrama, centering around the Foreign Legion. The plot besides being far-fetched, is depressing. Most of the action deals with the cruelties of a sadistic commander at a French foreign legion outpost, resulting in the death of many men. Nor are the hero's actions particularly edifying, for they are motivated by a desire for revenge. In one scene he is shown sending the cruel commander and his loyal soldiers out in the desert with just enough water for a short trip; all the men, with the exception of the commander, die. The love interest is somewhat silly:—

When Paul Kelly, an aviator working in France, learns that his brother, a member of the Foreign Legion, had died, he gives up his position to join the Legion; he requests that he be placed in the regiment to which his brother had belonged. He knew that his brother's death had been caused by the cruelties of the commander (C. Henry Gordon). Once at the outpost, Kelly gets a taste of this cruelty. Gordon causes the death of many other men. The men having decided to revolt, request Kelly to be their leader. Gordon and those soldiers who desired to remain loyal to him are sent out into the desert with a scant supply of food and water. Gordon, the sole survivor, reaches the nearest outpost and returns with soldiers and supplies. He arrives just at the time of an Arab uprising, during which Kelly and the other men distinguish themselves for bravery. Nevertheless they are arrested and tried; they are sentenced to four months' imprisonment. But they gladly serve this term, for Gordon's methods had been exposed and he had been removed from office. Lorna Gray, Kelly's fiancée, promises to wait for him.

Sam Fuller wrote the story, and Maxwell Shane, the screen play; D. Ross Lederman directed it. In the cast are Robert Fiske, Marc Lawrence, Dick Curtis, and others.

Not particularly suitable for children. No Sunday picture. Class B.



### "Smashing the Spy Ring" with Ralph Bellamy and Fay Wray

(Columbia, Dec. 29; time, 61 min.)

A good program espionage melodrama. It holds one's attention throughout, for the story is interesting, and the action fast and at times exciting. One is held in suspense in the second half; there the hero endangers his life in order to uncover the identity of the leader of the spy ring. Some of the methods employed by the spies in obtaining and passing on their information are novel, and, in spite of the fact that they are slightly far-fetched, engage one's attention. A pleasant romance is worked into the plot:—

Ralph Bellamy and Regis Toomey, members of the U. S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, are instrumental in the capture of a number of spies; but they cannot discover the leader. When they return to Washington, Bellamy visits his fiancée (Fay Wray), whose brother (Warren Hull), too, was a federal agent. Hull informs Bellamy that he was on the trail of the leader, and that he expected to meet him that night; he had arranged this by pretending to have government plans that he wanted to sell. The leader (Walter Kingsford), a doctor who ran a sanitarium as a "blind," finds out who Hull was, and has one of his henchmen murder him. Bellamy and Toomey, who suspected Kingsford, work out a scheme to trick him. Bellamy poses as a famous inventor of a poison gas who, because of the supposed death of Toomey from the effects of the gas, suffers a mental shock, thereby supposedly losing his memory. Kingsford, believing Bellamy to be the inventor, contrives to get him admitted to his sanitarium. He tries to get Bellamy to talk about the formula, but naturally to no avail. By snooping around, Bellamy finally obtains the information he needed, and notifies the federal agents to raid the place. They come just in time, for one of Kingsford's henchmen had recognized Bellamy as a federal agent.

Dorrell and Stuart McGown wrote the story, and they and Arthur Horman, the screen play; Christy Cabanne directed it. In the cast are Ann Doran, Forbes Murray, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "The Duke of West Point" with Louis Hayward, Richard Carlson, Tom Brown and Joan Fontaine

(United Artists, Dec. 29; time, 109 min.)

Very good entertainment; but it may need considerable publicizing, for the players are not strong box-office attractions. George Bruce, who wrote "Navy Blue and Gold," wrote this story; again he shows his understanding of the essentials for a good motion picture, for, as was the case with the other picture, it has human appeal, freshness of treatment, and deeply moving situations. Without becoming either over-sentimental or "preachy," the story stresses nobility of character, striking a patriotic note. And for excitement, there is, in the closing scenes, a hockey game which is certain to keep the spectators in tense suspense. The romance is routine:—

Louis Hayward leaves Cambridge University to study at West Point, where, for generations, the men in his family had studied. His father, who was connected with the American Embassy in London, warns him that he might find it difficult to acclimate himself to American ways since he had spent so much time in England; but Hayward, who was completely self-assured, laughs away his fears. No sooner does he arrive at West Point than he quarrels with Alan Curtis, an upper classman, because of his attempts to make friends with Joan Fontaine, the trainer's daughter, with whom Curtis was in love. Hayward's swaggering ways annoy his classmates; his only real friends are his roommates, Tom Brown and Richard Carlson. Knowing that Carlson's mother was in straitened circumstances, and that Carlson might have to leave school, Hayward wires her one thousand dollars, asking her not to tell Carlson about it. But in order to do this, he had sneaked out when he should have been in bed. An officer sees him in front of the telegraph office and telephones to Curtis. Curtis reports him. Taken before a board meeting, Hayward denies having been at the telegraph office, for he feared that, if he told the truth, Carlson would suspect what had happened. When the suggestion is made to him that he resign, he refuses to do so. An order is sent around that the students refrain from talking to him; they all obey this except Brown and Carlson. Hayward excels in sports and in his studies, yet no one talks to him; this goes on for a year, and Hayward suffers inwardly. Eventually, the truth comes out. The students apologize and offer their friendship, which Hayward gratefully accepts. Miss Fontaine, who had not lost faith in Hayward, promises to marry him.

Alfred E. Green directed it, and Edward Small produced it. In the cast are Donald Barry, Charles D. Brown, Jed Prouty, Emma Dunn, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Dawn Patrol" with Errol Flynn, David Niven, Basil Rathbone and Donald Crisp

(Warner Bros., Dec. 24; time, 101 min.)

A thrilling war-time aviation melodrama. First produced by Warners in 1930, the story has lost none of its exciting quality. The marvelous stunt-flying, the scenes showing combat between the German and British aviators, the bombing of an aerodrome and later of a railroad depot and of supply stations, are portrayed so realistically that they thrill one and hold one in tense suspense. As in the first picture, there is no love affair, nor do any women appear in the cast. But it has human appeal, awakened by the friendship between the hero and his pal, and by the sympathy one feels for the men who go to their death with a smile. How audiences of today will react to a picture such as this is for each exhibitor to decide for himself.

Errol Flynn, a British Ace, constantly complains to his commander (Basil Rathbone) because of the youth and inexperience of the aviators sent to him to combat with the experienced Germans. Rathbone is helpless to do anything about it; as a matter of fact his nerves reach the breaking point. Overjoyed when promoted, he appoints Flynn in his place. In a short time Flynn becomes similarly a nervous wreck, first, because he was accustomed to being in the air and fighting, and secondly because he worried about his men. He receives orders to put every man in the air. Although his best friend (David Niven) pleads with him not to send his young brother up, Flynn refuses to make exceptions. When his brother does not come back, Niven accuses Flynn of having caused his death. Flynn is ordered to send a lone aviator behind the German lines to destroy supplies and railroads, and calls for volunteers. Niven asks to be sent. Flynn, however, filling Niven with liquor, goes off on the perilous task himself. He accomplishes his work, but is killed.

John Monk Saunders wrote the story, and Seton I. Miller and Don Tothoroh, the screen play; Edmund Goulding directed it, and Robert Lord produced it. In the cast are Melville Cooper, Barry Fitzgerald, Carl Esmond, and others.

Suitability, Class A.

### "Going Places" with Dick Powell and Anita Louise

(First Nat'l., Dec. 31; time, 83 min.)

A fairly good comedy, with music. It is a remake, with a few changes, of "The Hottentot," produced twice before. Although the first two versions proved to be excellent box-office attractions, it is doubtful if "Going Places" will do more than fairly well, for the public taste in screen fare has changed in the last few years. Nevertheless it should prove fairly entertaining to the rank and file, for it has comedy, romance, and music. It offers some excitement in the closing scenes, when the hero, who didn't know how to ride a horse, competes in a difficult steeplechase race. One of the best musical numbers is that in which a group of colored singers, including Louis Armstrong and Maxine Sullivan, participate:—

Dick Powell decides to go to an important horse race meet, there to pose as a famous gentleman rider and to boost the sporting goods articles sold by his firm. The general manager goes along with him as valet. Powell finds himself in a difficult position: on the one hand, two gamblers (Harold Huber and Allen Jenkins) insist that he ride a certain horse in the race on which they wanted to place bets, and on the other, Anita Louise, with whom he had fallen in love, pleads with him to ride her horse. And the worst part of it all was that he did not even know how to sit on a horse. Notwithstanding the danger, he promises to ride Miss Louise's horse. But when Huber and Jenkins hear of this, they feed the horse apples and water, thereby making him unfit for the race, and thus putting Powell in the position where he was free to ride the horse they were betting on. Powell tells Miss Louise the truth about himself; she is enraged. In order to prove to her that he had courage, he decides to ride the horse the gamblers had bet on. He wins. Miss Louise forgives him and promises to marry him.

The plot was adapted from the play by Wm. Collier, Sr. and Victor Mapes. Maurice Leo, Jerry Wald, and Sig Herzig wrote the screen play; Ray Enright directed it, and Benjamin Glazer produced it. In the cast are Minna Gombell, Walter Catlett, Ronald Regan, and others.

Suitability, Class A.



extensively in last week's issue; in this issue, arbitration is discussed first in the list of concessions, contained in the distributors' memorandum:

"15. Arbitration: The principles and factors involved in the matters to be arbitrated, the rules and regulations to govern submissions, hearings and awards, the methods of selecting arbitrators and other matters in connection with the arbitration proceeding have not yet been fully discussed. Subject to agreement thereupon, **all matters herein** specifically made the subject of arbitration, all controversies concerning performances of existing contracts between a distributor and its customers and all claims that clearance or zoning now or hereafter existing is unreasonable and that an exhibitor has licensed more pictures than are required shall be subjects of arbitration.

"Conciliation also may be found to be a speedy and feasible method of settling certain classes of disputes preliminary to or in lieu of arbitration as may hereafter be determined."

According to the Allied memorandum, which was discussed in the November 26 issue of this publication, the distributors first offered local conciliation boards, with a possibility of establishing in New York City a national supervising body; but Allied proposed a procedure on the model of commercial arbitration involving: (a) the establishing of territorial panels of available men representing each economic division of the industry; (b) arbitration boards evenly balanced as between conflicting interests, with the right: (1) to call in a referee when needed; (2) to make the awards binding within the limitations of the general law and of the arbitration statutes in controversies such as (2a) clearance, even between exhibitors; (2b) selling away from an exhibitor customer; (2c) overbuying; (2d) coercion in selling pictures; (2e) assertion that there exists lack of available prints; (2f) compelling an exhibitor to buy a distributor's shorts, including newsweeklies and trailers; (2g) unsuitability of pictures for given communities; (2h) unsuitability of pictures designated by the distributor on certain days of the week; (2i) unfair competitive practices in the operation of theatres; (2j) shortage in the percentage-engagement reports; (2k) non-delivery of pictures already sold; (2l) holding up by prior runs the dating of pictures. As a matter of fact, the Allied memorandum called for the arbitration of all controversies arising under the exhibition contracts and the commitments of the distributors growing out of the negotiations.

The distributors, as the Allied memorandum stated, agreed to these proposals in principle, to be accepted after the details were worked out satisfactorily. They expressed a doubt, however, whether arbitration involving the operation policies of theatres, including clearance, could be made effective, particularly if the award involved the payment of money.

The Allied representatives felt that such matters could be legally arbitrated and the awards enforced through the courts if arbitration involved persons who had signed in advance an agreement to submit to arbitration all such differences. They told the distributor members of the committee that Allied felt sure that they could obtain the signatures of exhibitors, and that it was up to them to obtain the signatures of the affiliated exhibitors **as well as of the distributors.**

In spite of the fact that Allied attached so much importance to the subject of arbitration, the distributor memorandum, not only fails to put down any definite commitment, leaving the matter to future negotiations, but also limits the number of controversies that may be arbitrated. Coercive selling, forcing of shorts, newsreels and trailers, non-delivery of pictures already sold, holding up by a prior run of the dating of pictures, arbitration between affiliated and non-affiliated exhibitors—all these are left out, the implication being that they are not to be arbitrated.

How could any person, be he even a trade-paper editor, have ever conceived the idea that there was an agreement in Chicago, when the details of arbitration had not yet been worked out? What is happening now is just what Allied had feared would happen: the Allied Committee would not accept the distributor proposals, made finally to it in Chicago, as being "an agreement," because, as Mr. Abram F. Myers said, the details of arbitration had not been worked out, and the committee members did not want to put themselves into a position where they might be compelled to walk out on the conferences if there should be a disagreement as to such details. It was a wise foresight, for had they accepted the final distributor proposals in Chicago, they would have now found themselves in the position they so feared.

Why did the producers make their final proposals with-

out first settling the question of arbitration? They must have known that the exhibitors would balk at accepting any proposals from them unless the subject of arbitration had been agreed upon first, not to mention the question of theatre divorcement.

The remaining proposals will be discussed in the order in which they appear in the distributor memorandum.

#### "1. Cancellation Privilege."

This is nothing but a substitute for the elimination of block-booking and blind-selling. It offers to exhibitors the right to cancel anywhere from ten to twenty per cent of the contracted pictures. The members of the Allied committee might disagree with some of its minor details, but these might be ironed out if Allied should decide to let down the civic, fraternal and religious organizations that have been supporting the Allied cause for more than ten years, without which support Allied would not be receiving from the producers the consideration that they are now receiving. Without the passage of the Neely Bill in the Senate, which passage was made possible only because Allied received the whole-hearted support of a large number of non-theatrical influential organizations, it is doubtful whether the producers would be paying any attention to all those of us who have fought the block-booking and blind-selling evil for ten long years.

Allied owes a debt of gratitude to these organizations. Is it now going to let them down?

The producers say, of course, that, were block-booking to be eliminated, they would have to shut down. That is exactly what they said when a general outcry arose against the salacious pictures they were once producing. But not only did they not go broke after cleaning them, but they made more money they had ever dreamed they would make. When they know that they cannot sell the "clucks" they are now producing, they will stop producing them. The outcome will then be that they will be producing better pictures, helping not only themselves, but also the exhibitors. Every exhibitor knows that today, with all the bad business that exists in exhibition, when he shows a first-class picture, he makes more money than he has ever made. Correspondingly, however, he loses more money with bad pictures than he has ever lost. That is the answer to the producers' fear for the elimination of block-booking.

Even if Allied were to accept the cancellation provision that has been offered by the producers, which does not come up to its demand, I doubt whether it will stop the proponents of the elimination of block-booking from carrying on until they have seen it eliminated by a law. The system is wrong and cannot be cured by palliatives. And a palliative is the cancellation provision, even if the number of pictures that the exhibitor may cancel were to be raised to thirty per cent.

Block-booking must go!

### A LETTER FROM HERMAN BLUM

Mr. Herman Blum, of Baltimore, Maryland, an Allied member of the Board of Directors, has sent a letter to this office criticizing Red Kann, of *Boxoffice*, for his attitude towards Allied. "In the name of common sense," he says, "can you tell me what he's after? He is trying to twist around everyone's words. . . .

"Before the board meeting was closed . . . all were in accord with the statement Cole left with Mr. Rodgers. . . .

"There are two things on which I want to make a definite statement in answer to Red. First, the committee, as a whole, and I personally, have the highest regard for Mr. Rodgers' integrity, and secondly concrete has been poured for a foundation; I hope that everybody will give their honest effort to complete the structure."

### DICK ROWLAND BACK IN HARNESS

Mr. Richard Rowland, president of the original Metro company, and for several years head of First National before it was taken over by Warner Bros., has been engaged by Eddie Small to help those exhibitors who have booked "The Duke of West Point," released through United Artists, in exploiting the picture.

Mr. Small has taken a wise step, for Mr. Rowland is fully qualified for the work.

Dick Rowland has contributed much to the motion picture industry. While he was head of Metro, he produced "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," one of the outstanding successes of all time. And while with First National, he delivered to the exhibitors many a money-maker, among which were "The Sea Hawk," "Black Oxen," "Flaming Youth," and "Dark Angel."



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